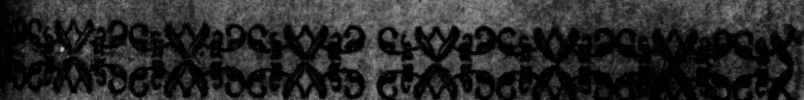


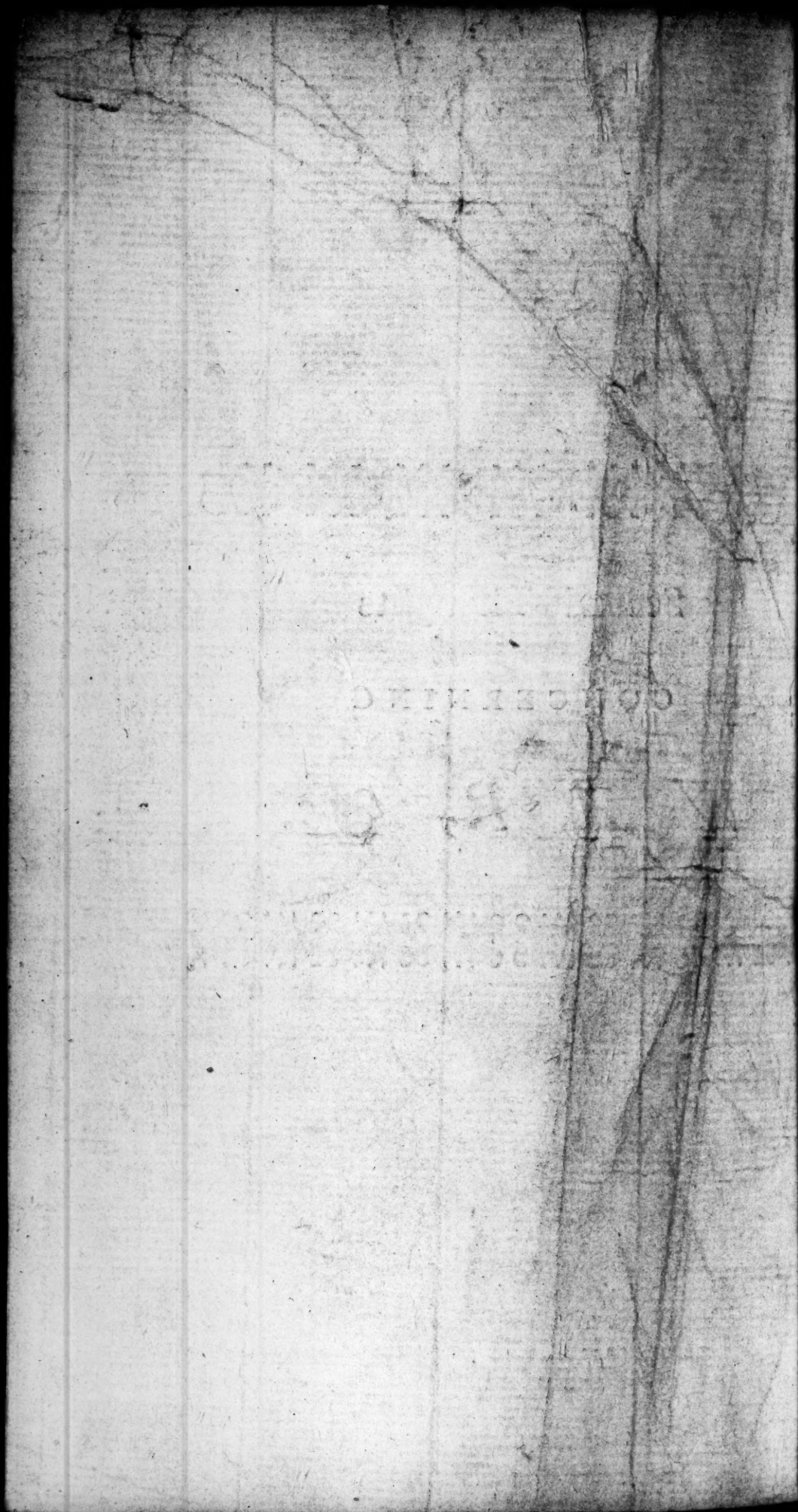


Second Thoughts

CONCERNING

W A R, &c.





Second Thoughts
Concerning

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W A R;

W H E R E I N

That Great Subject,

Is Candidly Considered, and Set in

French (R.)
K

A New LIGHT,

In ANSWER to, and by the AUTHOR of
A late P A M P H L E T,

I N T I T L E D

The N A T U R E and D U T Y
O F

Self D E F E N C E,

Addressed to the People called

Q U A K E R S.

I have uttered that I understood not, things too wonderful
for me, which I knew not. I have heard of thee by
the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee,
wherefore I abhor my self, and repent in dust and ashes.
Job xlii. 3, 5, 6.

N O T T I N G H A M:

Printed by SAMUEL CRESWELL, under the *New-Change*,
AND

Sold by M. COOPER, at the Globe, in *Pater-Noster-Row*,
L O N D O N. M.DCC.LV.

[Price, 1s. 6d.]





P R E F A C E.

AFTER a considerable time and various interruptions, this Book makes its publick appearance. I did once intend it the private inspection of a few select Friends in London, and a more publick examination in manuscript: But the great distance of my present residence from thence, other considerations and impediments, rendered both inconvenient; but though it hath no such sanction or advantage; yet this may be noted, that as the former book in behalf of war, was of my own penning, so are these second thoughts. Nor is any man in the world besides me accountable for my errors: And this book not having passed the M-----M-----g, neither that, nor the Society, are in the least accountable for it. For had it underwent such inspection, it might have been supposed by some, instead of being really my own thoughts, to have been new modelled by others; which it will now be out of the power of any man truly to say, who reads and believes this Preface. The present occasion of my appearing in print, is so peculiar and different from most others, as may not only excuse, but be a good reason for the manner of my doing it: Not that I dispute the convenience or necessity of a proper cognizance of manuscript books, as it may be useful in several respects.

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As I believe it was suggested, that the Quakers had hired me to retract my former book; I here declare, that none of them, either directly, or indirectly, made me any such offer: Our principles are above such temporizing expedients; and my friends as remote from offering, as I could be of desiring a bribe. I am sure, so far from such corruption, that when some kindness (though unknown to me and in my absence) was solicited in a case of near and trying moment, it was refused; tho' there was no want of ability, and had been no such obligations ever subsisting. Upon the subject matter of this request, &c. I printed and dispersed a paper in the winter of 1751, in London; part of which, I then intended to have recited and augmented in this preface; but have so far changed my mind to drop it, believing the affair will soon be agreeably conciliated to the satisfaction of all concerned therein.

As I would have the Reader assured, these second thoughts upon war are my own; I believe the liberty I have taken with some part of a book entitled, An enquiry into the validity of a late discourse intitled, the nature and duty of self-defence, will abundantly shew I was under no mercenary influence to take up my pen in this cause; and I hope the freedom I have used, as it seemed reasonable, and may help to withstand the invectives of our enemies, will be kindly excused: For besides the reasonableness of defending my self from some egregious undeserved abuses; the liberty I have taken might be necessary, if it were only to shew, that what I have wrote, is no temporizing expedient, owing to corruption, fear, or favour, but the free, ingenuous, though changed sentiments of my own mind; to which I may add, that though this writer and my self are now of one mind as to the doctrine itself, viz. the disuse of the sword, we differ so much in our manner of accounting for it, that without some previous notice of his book, it might have been on some accounts, very discouraging for me to have made my publick defence of our doctrine. If I have wronged him, he may rely upon all the satisfaction he can desire, or I am able to make, but I hope no ungenerous advantage

advantage will be taken against me. Too many writers, rather than retract one error generously, will justify twenty, with all the chicanery and perverseness of pride and pedantry; but I think the love of truth is better shewn, and that there is most honour, as well as most peace, in the free and hearty acknowledgment of our errors.

The Society of which I am a member, is very dear (as well it may) to me, for I adore in the inmost of my soul, that divine principle, upon which I believe it was founded. I have therefore no mind to be at variance with my friends, and hope time will evince the sincerity of my professions. I have seen in the place of my present residence, the ravages of that insolent rending self-willed contumacious spirit, which sometimes in new comers or converts, under a pretence of healing and reforming, makes things much worse than it finds them; this indeed is the design of the evil spirit, who in the mystery of iniquity, walks up and down in many disguises. And though the church has been much edified and honoured, by the services of honest faithful converts; she hath not been a little disquieted and dishonoured by others: It seems to have been the great failing of too many, instead of abiding long enough the inward purifying judgments of the great baptiser of souls, to know themselves rightly, they have been too impatient and active, in a false zeal, running fast into services whether of doctrine or discipline, for which they have no call, nor qualifications. When false zeal thus intrudes, and will not be said, nay; like Nadab and Abihu, Lev. x. it first brings its false fire to the altar, and if not extinguished there, it proceeds from bad to worse, till like Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, Numbers xvi. it breaks out into open defiance, under a specious pretence of zeal for the congregation of the LORD. There is now in the place where I write this, a dismal instance, too much of this kind: Two or three men (and there have been more) who are resolved to be active in things they are not qualified for, great is the rage, reviling, and rudeness of the ringleader of this faction, raving, barking, and bellowing, if not foaming, along the public streets, (after

(after the members of the meetings for church discipline, & they go from thence to their own houses) more like a mad beast than a meek sober man. Reformation is his pretence but his behaviour speaks great rage and revenge, if not some madness, more like a cursed spirit broke loose from the dwellings of distraction and horror, than a good angel descended from the regions of peace to bless and reform the church. And yet some persons under our name (tho' a very few) have been weak enough (if not worse) to encourage this faction; but I believe peace will never be to them nor their helpers in this way, nor their best help be any stronger than a Cobweb.

Soon after the publication of my former book, there appeared by way of answer, or antidote, a small printed piece intitled, The doctrine of the people called Quakers, in relation to their bearing arms, and fighting, &c. This piece was extracted from the works of Isaac Pennington; and though I believe it was rejected by many, as weak and frivolous, in my judgment it far excelled another which followed upon the same subject; and had the applause from several readers.

I say not this, to reflect uncivilly upon the author of the enquiry, or his performance, which I take to have been well intended, and to contain some things in themselves very excellent, how little soever they are to the purpose in the controversy. But yet I am so fully satisfied of my former error, have so little inclination to be troublesome or vindictive, that I would not only, as I have done, retract my former book publicly, but appeal to the enquiry, as a convincing argumentative evidence, on this delicate subject, had I been convinced, or confirmed in my alteration of judgment by this book, or could I receive it as some have done, as a clear and masterly performance. Nor am I alone in this sentiment, I will venture to say, there are several men of good natural parts, and gifts for the edification of the church, who judge in no sort favourably of the Enquiry, either as a full, or fair, or even tolerable answer, to the book it was written to confute.

P R E F A C E.

iv

It is executed on a plan, that will not stand the trial of reason: 'Tis built on the literal sense of scripture, and if a literal interpretation of the new Testament be followed throughout, it will assuredly set up and pull down the same things alternately.

The Enquirer is pleased to contend for the literal sense of the precept, resist not evil, and to say it prohibits wars, to which all must agree: But when he says it may equally be understood to prohibit war, and establish magistracy, he advances a paradox not easily solved, though he attempts to do it. If by the literal sense war is prohibited, because it resists evil, magistracy is overturned, because that does the same; and though I have not said much in the ensuing pages on this head; yet the way by which the Enquirer attempts to shew that the precept establishes magistracy, establishes defensive war too, as well as overturns the literal sense of the precept; and thus travelling in a circle, he comes back to the place where he set out, as the intelligent reader of his book may easily discern; whatever another sort of readers may have thought to the contrary.

It wounds magistracy to the very heart, so to insist on the literal sense of the precepts of loving enemies, and not resisting evil, as to raise outcries against defensive war, for killing and punishing in violation of this sense, when magistracy does the same: We had better be quiet than use such arguments. If Brutus the Roman, who had nobly distinguished himself in the cause of liberty, against tyranny, could command and cause his two sons to die publicly as traitors to their country, he himself all the while looking steadfastly on, with the affection of a parent, and the firmness of a patriot; well may the christian magistrate be allowed to punish or kill, and love, instead of hating his enemies, at the same time. To love, and to punish, are so far from being incompatible, that in some cases, one is the effect of the other. The love and care of the public is the magistrate's duty; they are his children, and when he punishes a part, it is for the good and preservation of the whole. He must be just, as well as merciful; he proceeds from mild to more severe punishments, with
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paternal

paternal reluctance towards those who fall under that sword which he bears not in vain: He is GOD's minister, Rom. xiii. 4. and has therefore power in his hand, and providence on his side, in various ways as occasion requires: And in almost every civil government the military power waits at his elbow, to assist in time of need; and to call this indiscriminately a power of destruction, as if on some occasions it could not be exercised, with the same good views, and to the same good ends, as magistracy, is taking an indecent liberty with a thing that deserves better treatment; as it is so far from being wicked in it self, that it hath been formerly commanded and blessed by the Almighty; and I doubt not under Providence may be a means to preserve magistracy and mankind; and may be a blessing and bulwark to us, as well as to others, tho' the wise œconomy of the great Governor of the world, may have instructed some to lay it aside, for as good reasons, as others for the present are allowed to continue in it.

In the mean time, to the forementioned little admirable extract, it is, that I confess myself to be indebted for a leading hint or two, and I hope nothing is here offered by me on the subject of war, but what is the genuine consequence of the hints given in this extract; the judicious author of which, as it stands in his works, as though sensible of the delicacy of the subject, gives it the title of, *somewhat* spoken to a weighty question: And as if he had judged it in vain to endeavour to make out his point from the literal sense of the precept, he seems to strike home to the root of the controversy, in a very different method; and considering the nature of the subject, seems to have executed it in such a manner as cannot easily be shaken or disprov'd.

Having him on my side, I confess adds nothing to the intrinsic weight of my arguments; but may be an advantage in disposing several persons to a serious favourable attention to those arguments, which without such a sanction might have been treated and disregarded as novel and strange. This little extract, so much admired by me, and with which I hope my book perfectly agrees, was I believe made from J. Pennington's works, and prefaced with encomiums by
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the Enquirer himself; and a good work it was, and had also a further sanction, as an antidote to my former book, before the enquiry was publish'd, if not before it was penn'd.

Our late deceased ingenious friend Thomas Story, was, I have heard, of opinion, that nothing short of being brought into the meek spirit of the Prince of Peace, could rightly convince men of the truth and excellency of our peaceable doctrine: Very deeply rooted indeed in human nature, are human passions and affections, very numerous and plausible the arguments for Self-defence. I have searched his journal pretty thoroughly upon this subject, and any judge of controversy, who has done the same, and perused the whole attentively, may, I think, easily perceive, that while over his adversaries, the author triumphs with an almost unrivalled greatness, in defence of some others of our tenets, he falls remarkably or at least comparatively short upon this head of war. And I cannot but think, that this great casuist's conduct in this point, goes far to prove our doctrine of peace to be of all others, wherein we differ from other societies, the most difficult to explain to the satisfaction of an adversary; and I apprehend the Enquiry to be another strong evidence of the same thing: I could name a third to make a triumvirate of writers, as expert, perhaps, if not so famous, in the field of controversy, as Cæsar, Pompey, and Anthony, in the field of war. But these things don't infer our doctrine to be wrong: It is one thing to admit with candour, difficulties which press this doctrine, and quite another thing to give it up as heterodox to its opposers. I hope the latter is not done by me: And, considering the delicacy of the subject, I hope to be pretty well understood; I have endeavoured to manage the argument with all the strength and perspicuity I am able, and with all due deference and candour towards such as differ from us herein, which I confess are at present the generality of mankind; But as a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump, so, as sure as the prophecies may be relied on, will this doctrine by degrees universally prevail.

I crave the learned (and every intelligent) reader's candour for such imperfections, as may have been the unavoidable result of my want of learning. There may be special occasions, that will warrant the unlearned to address the public; I hope this is such an occasion. Every animadversion I see or hear upon this work, ought to be suitably regarded by me: Those who shew the weakness of my arguments will be intitled to my acknowledgments; but such as shew how I might have argued more convincingly, will be the best friends to me and my cause,

Some Persons may think part of my reasoning too abstruse, and some distinctions too fine spun for many readers; but the nature of the subject, with the above assistance, seemed to lead me into the manner in which the subject is here treated; nor do I see how it can be otherwise accounted for; other methods have, I think, been long tried to little purpose: As the point is very nice, 'tis natural that some of the arguments and distinctions should be the same: The question is not, how nice or difficult, but how just and good they are.

*Several arguments might have stood more concise, and some readers of acute apprehension, may think me too prolix; but it is sometimes necessary, for the sake of others, to repeat, diversify, and place the same subject in a variety of lights, in hopes, if one is not, another may be understood. A short clear way of speaking or writing, of great use to some, is not so to all. More words and pains must be used to rouse the attention of many, or they will be in danger to slide superficially over what is spoken or written. We may have remarked two sorts of writers, who use many words to contrary ends. The one by this means explains and clears, while the other perplexes and obscures his subject. I know of no writer, whose arguments more abound with words, than the present Bishop of Winchester, nor none that uses them to better effect; wherein he seems to have followed an observation made by the great LOCKE, in a private letter to his darling friend Molyneux, viz. "This I often find, that
" what*

what men by thinking have made clear to themselves, they are apt to think that upon the first suggestion, it should be so to others; and so let it go not sufficiently explained; never considering that what may be very clear to themselves, may be very obscure to others." And some readers, who can readily take a writer's full meaning, from a few words well, (and sometimes but indifferently) put together, are too apt to censure his industry to be understood by all.

What reception my labour may find with others, I know not: This subject like others, may suffer from the inability of an advocate; but 'tis pity it should suffer from any foreign or wrong considerations; yet impartial judgment is hard to give, though truth has the same intrinsic excellence in a cottage, as in an academy; whether she come from the hand of the poor or the opulent. I should disdain if it were in my power, like some ancient and modern deceivers, to trick or wheedle people out of their reason and senses, to receive for religious truths, impious, absurd, and contradictory tenets, things ever condemned by pure religion; yet she hath some doctrines, which like her joys are above the comprehension of mortals. But the same good gift of reason in man, which sets him above being duped or cheated by craft and superstition, will, if rightly exercised, dispose to acquiesce humbly in all that God commands, whose wisdom is more above our reason, than superstition is beneath it; who is himself too wise to be deceived, and too good to deceive us. In fine, though it may be difficult to demonstrate our doctrine by argument, yet some things may be said for it, which it may be very difficult by fair christian argument to confute. The press is as free for others to oppose, as I have used it to defend this point of doctrine; and I hope to be neither too busy, nor too supine in defence of what is here publicly advanced, should it meet with publick opposition. The issue or event of my endeavours, I desire to leave freely to that Providence, whereby I hope my understanding hath been graciously enlightened, and my feet turned again into the way of peace, at a time when like Israel of old, my case seemed
very

very desperate. Why should ye be stricken any more, ye will revolt more and more, the whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint, from the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it, by wounds and bruises and putrifying sores. *Isaiah i. 5.* Let me therefore never forget the gathering day of unnumberable kindness to my soul; the reverent and affecting remembrance of which has sometimes melted me into humble contrition, and made my heart (once a den of thieves) the temple of GOD's praise. And let me also remember with christian affection, some who were made helpful to me in time of great sorrow and distress, to whom for my sake the word of reconciliation was richly dispensed, whose labours I trust have not been in vain in the LORD: But as I have been guilty of many mine offences, so have my sorrows been, exceeding great. But Oh! I cannot set forth the greatness and depth of the divine compassion, in sustaining me under, and in good measure bringing me through this dreadful condition. Such mercies as I have experienced, ought to be engraven indelibly in my remembrance as with the pen of a diamond, and well deserve to be declared as upon the house top. May the little residue of my time be devoted to GOD's service, and my dying breath praise his holy name,

RICHARD FINCH



Second Thoughts,

CONCERNING

W A R, &c.

I N the latter part of the Year 1746, I published a Book entituled, *The Nature and Duty of self Defence, address'd to the People call'd Quakers*; and about eighteen months after, gave public Notice of having changed my Sentiments in that Point; with a kind of promise to give my reasons publickly for this change: Which has been longer delay'd than intended; yet now, in pursuance of the notice first given, and to invalidate all groundless suggestions, as to the impossibility of executing effectually so difficult a task, the *Publick*, and our *own Society*, are here presented with my *Second Thoughts upon War &c.*

But I desire before the argument is entered upon, to shew a little, the spring of this change, and the *Motives* I have proceeded upon, in this weighty affair. And I do freely acknowledge, that at (and before) the time of writing the other book in behalf of War, I had wandered far upon the wing of vain speculation, and contention; had little, if any true peace in my own mind; but some fear least I had done amiss; suspecting, that I should not have wrote, and published the said book, had I not first grievously apostatized from a much better condition: But as these reflections were faint, and transient, they soon became abortive; and in their absence it might seem to me, that the book I had published was unanswerably the truth.

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And least any one should expect more proof than the point I am now to defend is capable of, I here candidly confess, that I esteem the doctrine of *Non-resistance*, so hard to be made out to the meer reason of mankind, and in that view, so pressed with difficulties, that I believe no human wisdom could have settled and satisfied me upon this point; tho' many who look little beyond education or tradition, and some sensible persons, who *have never* well considered this point, may think it one of the plainest we hold, and therefore the most easily supported.

I hope this concession will give no offence, as I think it *cannot* weaken the true *evidence*, both of *this*, and *some other* points; as well of the religion of nature so called, as of our own common Christianity. For all truths, seem not to our reason, to have the same numbers, strength, and clearness of evidence. Somemay be *more easily*, and better explained than others, tho' in themselves equally true, and therefore equally clear in God's sight, who sees all things just as they are: While Man from the weakness of his intellects, under many prejudices and impediments, cannot discern things in this infallible manner, but too often judges *erroniously*.

I say not this to set aside the due authority of human reason, or *testimony of our senses*, in clear indisputable cases, where the implicit surrender of reason, or sense has many dismal effects, as in the doctrines of *Predestination*, and *Transubstantiation*, and perhaps several others: Between which, and our doctrine of peace, *there seems to be this clear disparity*. In the *former points*, 'tis only weak presumptuous fallible Men, requiring our subscription, or credence to articles of their religion, which *we are sure are impossible to be true*. In the *latter*, 'tis as we believe, *God himself*, not by a written revelation only, but, by his own *immediate word*, requiring our assent, and obedience to a doctrine, attended we confess with some difficulties, *but not reducible to a contradiction*. While therefore with a manly as well as christian resolution, we withstand the craft or ignorance of Man, we ought entirely to submit to God's will, because such an authority to command befits him, and entire obedience becomes man.

And

And if in forsaking the doctrine of *Self Defence*, I have captivated in some degree my reason to the obedience of faith, it is no more than every sincere christian in other points must do; and I apprehend that using our reason modestly, in humble subordination to divine wisdom, is the right way to exalt reason; when those who plead for its absolute sufficiency in religious matters, tho' its pretended friends and admirers, are in reality its greatest foes and underminers.

A Deist of quality (if any such there be) who scorns and ridicules all divine mystery, which God hath not seen fit to explain to his fancy, would resent it highly, if his own mortal servants, should refuse him obedience, till he had first fully explained to them, the reasons and motives of his commands, many of which might be above their capacities to understand, or if not, they are bound to obey without such condescension in him; and so are all mankind in respect to God's laws, tho' some of them are more level to our capacities than others, and he is pleased in some cases to condescend to reason with poor dust and ashes; yet we should never presume upon this, to be vainly or presumptuously inquisitive, But to return from this little digression.

About the time wherein the book I now retract, was penned, I was in a very unsettled state of mind, spending much precious time, in unedifying speculations, and a very frequent attender of certain public venders of husks and heresy; with a view to contend with and confute, not to join them; their principles ever appearing to me, as a sad mixture of folly and blasphemy; extremely repugnant to human understanding, as well as to Christianity.

But it pleased God, who is rich in mercy, as I firmly believe, and have many times reverently remembered, once more to draw me towards himself, and afresh incline my mind, to attend those religious assemblies, where I had formerly enjoyed that satisfaction of mind, which I never so experienc'd in any other place of public worship; which may be accounted for, when we consider, that the truest method of waiting for divine strength and comfort, is, in this day, too

much *derided* and *disfused* as novelty and Enthusiasm : Yea every other society, under the Christian name, is so full of human activity, rites and ceremonies, which instead of bringing to, have a natural tendency, to lead the mind far away from the *Gospel Worship, performed in Spirit and truth* from that divine and blessed union with the father of spirits, which before the fall, *was the happy enjoyment* of our first Parents in paradise, and more or less of all holy Men, and Women, throughout every successive generation.

And though *silent Worship* be too much the *Wonder* and *Contempt* of mankind, it is pretty clearly deducible from the Bible ; and from the *Spirituality* and *Omnipresence* of the Deity and the nature of the soul of Man, which is also *Spiritual* this worship is to be justified upon rational and philosophical principles.

And I no sooner complied with the *drawing* afore-mentioned, but I was favoured with a *composure* of mind, to me unknown for a long season before : *My book came fresh into remembrance* ; and the same which spread a solemnity over my mind, *seemed to intimate, or at least, it then appeared to me, that I should, or might, in due time, as heartily retract, as ever I wrote it, which I now do.* And were I to feel down all, that hath since befallen me, in the course of my experience, some might think it *very strange*, while others more sober and considerate would readily acknowledge a divine hand to have followed, or led me along. And I can in truth say, to such as disapprove my change of sentiment, that *Enthusiasm*, hath been so much my abhorrence, and *Infidelity even to Atheism it self*, so strong a temptation ; that I stood strong on my guard, against the one, and might willingly, have embraced the other ; as a screen, or patronage for those vices, which religion assures us, we must strictly account for.

In truth, *I would not be an Enthusiast*, (in the modern sense of the word) and *I could not fairly, or honestly be an Infidel* : For I found something working powerfully within me (*and feeling is strong evidence*) which with my sophistical, free-thinking quirks or skill, I could not, without offering violence

ence to my own happiness, resolve into the operations of my own mind ; I became not only sensible that I had done myself wrong, but in some seasons, I had, *not of reward*, but by way of *Invitation, & encouragement* to return, such serenity & consolation of spirit, as I believe *no words can describe*, or heart of the natural Man conceive, and which I believe, all the powers of reason, or imagination, *utterly incapable* to bestow on the mind of Man. And of this rock of living refreshment, hath my soul *sweetly*, and *deeply drank* many a time since, or, I had hardly been preserv'd through so many deep trials, to praise my deliverer upon the banks of deliverance, as blessed be God I measurably can : And Oh ! that mine old acquaintance, who shared with me in my former evil, and criminal recreations, would but now come taste and see, how good God is, for no tongue or pen can fully declare it.

I had also besides, proceeding I doubt not from the same spirit, corroborating evidence from the christian ministry without, *so extraordinary*, as to confirm me in the belief of the *divine origin*, and authority of the inward drawing, and operations before mentioned. And I cannot but think, it must excite a seriousness, if not strike a great awe, upon any unthinking person, to hear his secret thoughts laid open, and his inward condition, *powerfully and pertinently* spoken to in a mixed publick assembly, by such as *know nothing outwardly*, of his person or condition ; & this with an energy from simple illiterate preachers, beyond all the oratory of the *Stage, Pulpit, or Bar*, mine ears ever heard, and I have had but too much curiosity in rambling abroad for entertainments of such kinds ; especially the *Pulpit* and *Stage* ; and therefore, I do not speak or write at random. Wherefore such *illiterate Preachers*, must have received their qualifications in a *much higher School*, than any worldly university : And great pity it is, the world should *despise*, or be *strangers* to, this truly excellent gospel ministry.

And the more I proceeded in this way, the stronger were my confirmations, that the *true path* was now open before me, and that my restoration and happiness, would depend

on walking faithfully therein ; but as to *retracting* what I had wrote and printed against the doctrine of peace, I was far from being precipitant therein, *but waited a suitable time to discharge that concern* ; being very careful least I should mistake the *imaginations*, of my own heart, or the *transformations* of an insidious evil spirit, for those *pure impressions*, which are *different from, superior to*, and if humbly attended to, can preserve out of both these snares. But being convinc'd upon motives solid and substantial to me, that the fit time to disavow, what I had publicly maintained was come, I gave notice in a publick News Paper at L O N D O N, *That the Author of the Nature and Duty of self Defence, had changed his sentiments in relation to that Point.* And disagreeable as it might be to comply, I had a peace and satisfaction in it, which the *vanity or victory* of an author, is I believe an utter stranger to. Nor was it 'till several months after this, that I gave *voluntarily* the society, that satisfaction which is due from her members who have flagrantly, and publicly deviated from a fundamental doctrine. And this measure I also weighed with due fear and caution, least I should be imposed on my self, or impose upon others. And I had while this weighty affair was depending in my own breast, *some reason to admit the existence of an invisible, evil tempting spirit*, as well as of the *immediate presence and providence of GOD*: For when I had resolved to discharge this duty, I was inwardly assaulted and disturbed in a manner not to be easily expressed in words, but believing it to be a tempest of the grand enemy's raising, I complied to do my duty, *finding a fresh spring of power to do it in*, and the cloud was removed, and a true reward of peace had I indeed ; which was also measurably my lot, in the publication of a small printed paper in the winter of 1751 in L O N D O N. And tho' this may be ridiculed by many as the *rankest Enthusiasm*, I esteem it my duty from the like concern as before, to publish what I now write, and account it a mercy, for which it is impossible I should be too thankful ; that I have been spared alive to the present day ; a monument of the long forbearance of that *being*, whose vengeance might long ago, *have justly cut me off and appointed my portion with the abominable and disobedient who forget him, and live and die in their sins.*

And

And tho' as a *Casuis*t I might, and perhaps could, have long maintained my former argument ; yet so strong are divine convictions, (tho' incommunicable by words to the inexperienced) and such the prevalence of divine love shed abroad in the heart, as absorbs every vain-glorious view, & instead of contending with the *wisest*, I could freely have acknowledg'd my error to the *meanest* spiritual member of the true church.

As to those *who may doubt* the being of a *GOD*, or *deny* his providence, I shall perhaps on the point in hand say little to them. There are I believe many good treatises extant on the subjects of *Deity* and *Providence*, which they might do well candidly to peruse ; tho' I believe no argument so effectually convincing, as that whereon my own change of sentiment in the matter of war hath been chiefly produced. And though I would endeavour to reason with every sober intelligent christian into whose hands this may come, yet I have a *peculiar view* to our own society, whose *principles*, I have cause to think, *my former book*, hath somewhat contaminated, and whom it hath been my concern to endeavour to set right again ; as I believe providence hath taught me better than when I was *foolishly presuming* to instruct others. And surely, if there is a supreme mind, that made, and for that reason *strictly regards* mankind, the method I have pursued for my own satisfaction in this important affair, is no more than the reasonable duty, of such a frail dependent creature as by experience I find my self to be, and notwithstanding *some difficulties*, (while there are no contradictions) I ought, *with all reverent alacrity*, to submit my doubts in all religious matters to the wisdom & authority of the Almighty.

Moreover, I think the scripture, not only fully warrants, but requires this procedure, in the promise of a gift of the holy **spirit*, for the guidance of *believers*, and the absolute necessity it lays them under, to obey its dictates, springing evidently from two pretty plain facts ; *the corruption of human nature*, and *the imperfection of the human understanding*, though the latter alone would be reason sufficient in this case.

** This divine doctrine of immediate revelation, I apprehend to be clearly reveal'd in the New Testament, and so abundantly prov'd, by many excellent writings long since, that I have no need fully to prove it here.*

I know of no one point of doctrine, more clearly laid down in scripture, or more often, and earnestly inculcated by Christ and his Apostles, or indeed any thing that human nature more needs; *than that of a spiritual guide or divine light in man.* This fundamental in divinity, *much lost,* or overlooked in time of the great apostacy from primitive christianity, was never since (that I have read or heard so truly revived or restored to its primitive use, and dignity in religion, as by those *sons of the morning and stars of the first magnitude,* our own dear friends about the middle of last century. And if any now amongst us, of seeming religious eminence; whether train'd up in the society, or such who by *convincement* have received the truth of christianity in the love of it; and also a dispensation of the gospel to preach to others; and yet think and talk too much in the same way concerning war, as my former book maintains; I beg leave with respect and tenderness, a little to *interrogate* them upon this weighty affair. Did they not *embrace* true religion, and receive a gift of the ministry, upon the inward evidence for which I contend? Did not this *inward illumination,* surpass and shine *above* their rational faculties? or could their reason have convinc'd them of the *one,* or impower'd them for the *other*? Do they still believe in, and experimentally feel this divine principle of *life, light and power* in themselves and yet in the case of war, and we may fear, in some other points, lean for instruction to their own understanding? I am fully persuaded, that if any such among ourselves, *oppose,* or think lightly, of our peaceable christian testimony; they have only reasoned in a carnal way like the children of this world, and *not* brought home as they ought to do, this doctrine to the divine teacher in themselves though they profess to have this *guide* to learn, and to do other things by its immediate instructions and ability. This surety, is an inconsistency much to be lamented, and ought to be reformed; as it *cannot* I think on their own principles *possibly* be justified.

And all others, who profess to believe the holy scriptures, would they be truly consistent, *must* in some measure form their judgment of *this,* and several other doctrines *chiefly* upon the authority, of this inward divine principle, in

Man

Man ; either in the true interpretation of scripture, or if the spirit of GOD please, by his own immediate instructions without (but not against) the scriptures.

Shou'd this book be opposed from a *certain quarter*, as I've had reason to believe, we may expect that the law of nature so called, will be much pleaded and insisted upon, as immutable and invariable : But as no christian can, I apprehend, consistently urge this plea ; a small matter on this head may suffice for the present.

Self defence, upon this *Law*, no interposition being made, or command by the Almighty given to the contrary, is, for ought I perceive, *perfectly warrantable* ; but as *nature* is GOD's work, *ever liable* to his interposition or controul, as many wise and good men of other religious persuasions have allowed ; he may certainly upon some occasions, for good ends, *require* us to forego, or suspend our natural powers, and rely on him for protection ; and where is either the danger, or absurdity of this ; when if one fence be taken down, a stronger is erected in its room ? Were the laws of nature immutable, it would be *incongruous* in the Almighty, to *obstruct* their course, or common channel in any single instance, either to bless, or punish mankind, in *over-ruling* natural causes by miraculous displays of supernatural power ; and yet 'tis allowed he hath often seen meet to make such visible manifestations of his great power, in *altering, agitating, or controuling* what is deemed the common course or law of nature, and perhaps hath much oftner done so, secretly and invisibly to us. Wherefore, the immutability of the law of nature, must by every sensible humble christian, be relinquished, it being exceeding bold, and arrogant, to prescribe rules in this point to the great GOD of nature.

I give my self little concern as to the argument, with the daring assertions of some intrepid gainfayers. *I would not* (says one of these virulent enemies to religion) *believe my own eyes were I to see a stone roll up a hill.* So silly and blind, as well as prophane does infidelity render mankind ; for as *uniformity, no less than immutability*, is, or ought to be, their boast of nature's laws ; it would I think, well become this

bold writer, to reconcile the opposition, which this case of his own supposing, strongly presents between the laws of gravity, and the *sense of sight*, seeing both, are parts of the same law of nature. By which law (if I may so call it) *no known* impediment interfering, we are required to adhere to the testimony of our senses, as well as by our reason and experience to conclude it *impossible* according to gravitation, for a stone to roll up a hill. Yet were not this writer, as blind as an *Atheist*, who denies the existence of all power out of matter, he might, should such a case happen, give credit to his eyes, & allow a stone to roll up a hill, or any thing similar to be effected; because the power sufficient for that, and other purposes, *might be invisibly apply'd*. For it seems indeed very hard, if not impossible to conceive, how that *self moving* power we experience in our selves, can reside in, or arise from, any material system, in what state or mode soever.

Give me leave now to remonstrate upon, or mention some points held in common among christians, which the brightest of them, may be more incapable to explain by argument, to the satisfaction of an adversary, than we are to explain, and defend our non-resisting doctrine. Who among mortals, is able to explain or comprehend the nature of *creation*, or *foreknowledge of future contingences*? Who can frame any positive or even tolerable idea of spirit, or conceive by what way spirit can be annexed to, or move matter? On the other side, look ever so deeply into matter, it seems utterly unproductive of thinking, and beginning motion, but once at rest always so, as to any power it hath in it self to begin motion, so that, as on the one hand, the impossibility, or extreme difficulty, of arriving at a satisfactory idea of Spirit, may have induced some very inquisitive persons to admit the existence of material beings only; on the other hand, others no less inquisitive and penetrating, believing *matter* utterly incapable of producing certain operations and powers, we find in our selves, have therefore I believe been *drawn* or *disposed* to admit the existence of another kind of beings, capable of such operations, & exertions of power. Though to mortals, the nature, or essence of Spirit, seems very inconceivable, and inexplicable; and possibly such as the bold writer mentioned just now wou'd say

the

the existence of spirit is a contradiction in the idea or conception of the human mind ; but such men should consider, how little they clearly know, of many things more familiar and easy to be known, and the infinite disparity in knowledge and power which there is between GOD and Man, and even the highest order of created intelligent beings. And further, which seems an extreme difficulty, if our spirit be an inhabitant of this house of clay, or tenement of flesh the body : if the mind be really a distinct being, from the body ; *how comes it about* that we are not capable of considering, and distinguishing our souls from our bodies, as their dwelling places, in the same easy and clear manner, as we do our selves, viz. soul and body, from any outward house or building, into which we enter and remain. These things, how mysterious soever, yet who dare say it is not possible, did not a special reason forbid, to exhibit these, and other difficulties in a stronger manner. Nor perhaps have points of religion alone, their *mysteries*; such as have read the Bishop of Cloyne's Analyst, and his defence of it, may see what inextricable difficulties *at least* beset, *human science* in some parts of it.

But as to those appertaining to religion ; shall we, like the beetle eyed, stony hearted infidel, rather than admit them, *soar* to the very height of presumption ; let us rather *sink* into the depths of humility, before him, who does all things by the rules of infinite wisdom and truth ; which doth not always make Man so wise, as his vanity or curiosity, may prompt him to desire to be. And possibly, our present low imperfect state, can no more admit of obtaining the knowledge of some things, than it would be possible to make a *speaking parrot* a good *mathematician* or *astronomer*, or to convey by words, the true idea of colours to one born blind.

We see, and know enough in many cases to check our pride, and dispose us to be humble. As some things lie beyond our reach ; others more common and familiar, have in them (as I think a great writer in substance observes) *something sufficient to confound the most enlarged understanding upon earth*. The contexture of the meanest vegetable, that grows, the frame of the poorest insect that crawls on the ground, is in some measure to human skill, *inexplorable*. Our

best ideas, being therefore *inadequate* to the compleat investigation of the lowest works of nature ; how much more, may some points of greater weight and sublimity, relating to a much nobler workmanship, to living souls, and free agents, transcend our reason and penetration? There is a depth, and wisdom in the divine ways and works, very often *inscrutable* to mortals ; though we want not as much light and power, as are *needful* to shew us our duty, and enable us to perform it. And I am persuaded that our peaceable doctrine, though *pressed* with some difficulties, is not so hard of proof, as some christian tenets already mentioned. And here now, as to my self only, I apprehend enough has been said to induce a candid eye to look favourably upon my alteration of judgment : But I have several things to say, by way of more direct argument. Yet even still, before I enter upon this work, shall I crave a further respite ; while to clear my self from some misrepresentations, I take liberty to remark on some passages in a book entitled : *An enquiry into the validity of a late discourse, intituled, The Nature and Duty of Self Defence*, not to weaken our christian doctrine, but possibly (as well as a reasonable defence of my self in some points only) pave the way to establish it on a firmer basis.

It seemed to me extraordinary, and I believe not to me only, to find my self treated by the *Enquirer* as one who had asserted an *absolute independent power in Man to preserve himself*, of which I am not guilty, as is clearly implied in other parts of my book ; wherein having considered defensive war, as a just mean or method, to preserve mankind, I supposed it worthy as well as other means we use, to be prospered by God's blessing and providence, who is hereby considered as man's *helper*, which would be unnecessary, and absurd, if Man had the absolute power of preserving himself. Let us see by what arguments this charge is supported.

“ The positions (*says the Enq.* page 1) which this author lays down, as the basis of his performance, are page 1
 “ that self defence, is every Man's right and duty by nature. Ibid.
 “ that the defence of our own life and property, is every Man's
 “ right and duty by the law of nature. - What he means by nature

" nature, and the law of nature, he explicates page 2. *By the powers of nature; and that power which nature hath given us, to preserve our selves.*

" Which assertion (*says the Enq.* page 4) has so manifest a tendency to exclude God's providence, either out of the world, or out of the argument, that our author guards against that objection, by telling us page 3 *that he has no such design.* If that be true 'tis a reflection on his prudence to have used the most probable means of attaining an end he does not aim at." But if God hath given man this natural power, it can have no such *manifest tendency*: and as it is allowed I guard against such construction, it looks as if I was aware of the *ill use*, which men of *weak or worse* minds might make of my words, and was therefore in no danger from a candid enquirer; and yet rather than my meaning should be orthodox, or any imaginary advantage of runing me down be lost, it is strongly insinuated I have told a fib, as the words *if that be true* disengeniously import.

The Enq. also saith, pages 3, 4. " It seems to me irrational in them, who are preserv'd (in battle) to ascribe their preservation to those powers, which the slain were equally possessed of, and in the full possession and exercise of which they were destroyed, and which consequently were not the powers of self preservation. "

Absolutely, and independently *they are not*, but yet I do think they may be called the powers of self preservation, (or they are no powers and *not the less* real powers because *limited*, or liable to be *overcome*, or wholly *taken away*, or because we ought to remember who gave them, and on all suitable occasions to exert these powers, under a *dependance* on the higher power. And if being overcome, proves the subdued *not to be vested* with a power of self preservation; by the rule of contraries, some might be apt to think, that such as overcome *are vested* with this power, which is successfully exerted in battle and victory. But the truth I think is, that being overcome or slain in battle, proves no more the *non-existence* or *non-residence* of the power of self preservation in Man, than we can prove one pound to be no weight, because two pounds will weigh it down in a scale.

Absolute

Absolute independent human powers of any kind, are so repugnant to common sense and experience, such a *direct contradiction* to the admission of providence into the argument, that my admitting it so fully, was the same in *candid construction* as to say: *That limited power which nature hath given us to preserve our selves.* And the Enq. in this matter, appears at best to have been carelessly *unfair*, or very hard put to it for argument, in so palpably wresting my words to a sense, which he *must* or *might* have known, was *never* intended; and which the pleaders for war, do not contend for; viz. *absolute independent human powers.* D----- H----- of Sk-----p-----n, a scholar, and perhaps a good casuist, was I believe so little pleased, with my being so badly treated on this head, that he *averred a goose* to have the power of self preservation, as indeed every living goose hath. And I cannot help it, if the candid reader, instead of concurring with the *Enquirer's* unjust reflections upon me, should deem his treatment of this part of my book egregiously unfair and impertinent. For I *did not* call it an absolute power, but only *that power*, and in *less than four lines* below, comes what I said concerning providence, which tho' I study to avoid quotation I hope here to be indulged. "I have *no design* to exclude GOD's providence either out of the world, or out of the argument. Those who absolutely exclude providence (as all do who teach the absolute sufficiency of human powers) teach the most melancholy and uncomfortable doctrine that can be advanced. If it was not beneath the Deity at the first to *create*, it can be no dishonour, to *interpose* as he sees meet afterwards. The *same* wisdom and goodness that prompted to creation, must *necessarily* prompt to *inspect*, *superintend* and preserve his creation &c." S. Defence page 3.

The providence of GOD, is here *expressly* admitted in the very argument of it self, which together with other parts of the same paragraph, might be deemed such a full and orthodox explanation of the words in dispute, that no writer of understanding or candour, could so unjustly have wrested them. So evident I take this to be, that had providence never more been mentioned in my book, this alone had been sufficient, but there is yet more evidence.

" The

"The providence of God, co-operates, and accompanies with a blessing the use of fit and proper means ; it was so formerly. When the Jews went forth to battle according to the mind of God, he accompanied their armies and gave them success." *Self Defence* pages 10, 11.

And the *writer* of the *self defence*, not only admits of this providence to assist in the use of proper means (which his book then deemed defensive war to be in all) but page 43 extend it to such on account of their *sincerity*, who through mistake, as the book says, refused to use the proper means of *self defence*. Wherefore though the greatest part of the *Enquirer's* first 12 pages, proving by scripture that Man has no absolute independent powers to preserve himself, be well adapted to the nations of old, who regarded not the works of the Lord, nor the operations of his hands ; very excellent lessons of humility and trust in God, and a just rebuke of the proud and self sufficient in our time ; yet seem to have little or no argument against my former book, which doth not plead for independent human powers, but considers war, as a means of self preservation *under* providence. And some of the texts produced by the *enquirer* against me, relate to persons and cases, of the *same nature* for which I had contended ; or cases wherein war was practiced by God's people and prospered by him. It may therefore seem strange, that readers of good sense, could ever believe the *Enquirer* was here reasoning well against, or confuting me, when the texts produced are impertinent to the controversy, unless to plead the cause of defensive war, as they shew clearly, that resistance, and war, were of old accompanied with great humility and trust in God : The very thing contended for by the most sober pleaders for war ; though I do not forget, that the same God, who thus in battle stood by his servants of old, under more weak imperfect dispensations of time, hath been pleased under the gospel to require of *some*, a far greater dependence, upon his own arm and power for preservation.

But 'tis remarkable, that while the *Enquirer* is chiding me for speaking of *that power which nature hath given us to preserve our selves*, he, himself, page 5 is as heterodox. " Experience (says he) assures us that perverse Men, by an unnatural

“ natural and unreasonable application of the power which nature hath given them, for the exercise of mutual love and benevolence, have often compassed the destruction of themselves and one of another.” Now, should this scrap be rigidly construed, separate from other passages; the author might be charged with setting up in Man, a natural independent power to do good; and by this unfair method it is that he condemns me. And it seems plain, that if, by the *abuse* of this natural power, we may *destroy* our selves and others, by the *right use* of it; we may under providence *save* or *preserve* our selves and others. What can he say to that text: *Save your selves from this untoward generation*. Such language from me I suppose would hardly have escaped reproof from his pen.

It is also observable, in what manner the *Enquirer* speaks as before quoted, of *Men being slain in battle in the full possession, and exercise of their natural powers*, whence he too hastily concludes, *they cannot be the powers of self preservation*. Our natural powers duly exercised, though sufficient to preserve in *some*, are not so in all cases; yet failing in some instances, is I think no proof of their insufficiency in all. Nor do I see, this *strange* conclusion, that because a Man's natural power is overcome, and himself slain in battle, that he had never before exerted these powers successfully for his own preservation.

I can agree with the *Enquirer* page 9, that Goliath glorying in his natural strength and stature, disdain'd little David; but then I am weak enough to believe that David slung the stone at least partly by his own natural strength, tho' it might be also providentially accelerated and directed to its mark which bespeaks a co-operation of human and divine power, of Man's natural strength and God's help. If human powers be not in some cases the powers of self preservation (and I have never said they are in all) *what kind of powers are they?* Powers to do nothing? strange jargon indeed; and yet I think they can be no more; unless in some cases, under due limitations, they are allowed to be the natural powers of self preservation, or that power which nature hath given to preserve our selves.

It is indeed true, as the *Enquirer* observes page 23, "That
 " Man hath not a moment of existence but what depends
 " on the immediate care and providence of God." No
 Man I think can do good without his *aid*, nor evil without
 his *permission*. Man I believe hath a real, though limited
 power to preserve himself, as well as to be *loving and benevo-*
lent to others. By this benovolence he may feed the hun-
 gry, cloath the naked, and preserve his fellow creatures
 from perishing; and may therefore do as much for himself.
 So great a writer as *Robert Barclay*, goes I think further than
 I did, and saith Man hath an *absolute power*. Distinguishing
 that which is *natural*, from that which is *spiritual*, he saith.
 " This light, feed, &c. appears to be no power, or faculty of
 " Mans' mind; because a Man that's in his health, can
 " when he pleases, stir up, move, and exercise the faculties
 " of his soul; he is *absolute* master of them. &c." *Barclay's*
Apology, 4th Ed. page 147.

If Man hath such power as this, he hath also *sometimes* the
 like power to stir up his body to motion and action, for his
 own, or anothers preservation: Yet as Man strictly speak-
 ing, hath no absolute powers of his own of any kind, and
R. B. uses the word *absolute*, and I did not, the *Enq.* will do
 more than is expected if he can excuse *R. B.* or himself,
 without excusing me.

Our natural powers of self preservation, tho' limited are
real powers, or I think we could not be accountable for *abu-*
sing them. And it seems clear to me, that *nature* in some ca-
 ses, hath given me power to preserve my self, as sure as it
 hath given the *Enq.* power to be *loving and benevolent* &c.
 When I stretch forth my hand, step, or run aside to avoid
 apparent danger, a house tumbling; a mad, or malicious
 Man with a drawn sword, a mad dog or bull advancing to-
 wards me, and in a thousand instances that may happen, I
 do thus by a power that may properly be called my own as
 a free agent, as much as the *Enq.* gives alms by a power that
 is properly his own; unless all we *think, say* and *do*, is by
 mere *mechanism*, or *necessity*, which my friend will by no means
 admit. Had I asserted, Man to be invested with absolute
 independent power, to preserve himself, the *Enquirer's* rea-
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soning had been just, and I should have been as egregious a fool to have admitted providence into the argument, as the censures passed upon me, are unmerited and uncandid in a superlative degree.

Once more ; our natural powers both of body and mind, duly exerted, have no doubt in many instances, preserved from sickness and death* and many calamities, which such as *abuse* or *neglect* these powers bring on themselves. I suppose that when the plague raged in LONDON, a Man, might have went thither, caught the distemper and died ; and that many hundreds who timely removed from thence, were thereby preserved much longer alive. If the *Eng.* house was desperately in flames, and he had time to escape, I suppose he would do it *by that power which nature hath given him to preserve himself.* (which power I should really believe to be a power of self preservation, though his wife, son, or daughter should perish in the same flames.) And a similar conduct do Men by their natural powers pursue in more instances than can be easily enumerated. And though I have to do with a learned experienc'd casuist, yet truth and fact will stand by the more simple ; and I apprehend that *eating* and *drinking*, *plowing* and *sowing*, *temperance*, and due *cloathing*, are such proofs of the powers of self preservation in Man, as no subtilty can evade. Great Men are fallible and liable to mistakes, which to support tenaciously is yet worse, as to retract them frankly, shews true nobility of mind indeed.

These natural powers, or powers bestowed by the God of nature, I had, *Self defence* page 18, occasionally called *our first help* ; which the *Eng.* page 34, calls, *preferring the power of Man to the assistance of GOD* : when I *only* intend it in order of time, *not* of worth and dignity. The Apostle Paul 1 Cor. xv. 46. says plainly : *Howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural ; and afterwards that which is spiritual.* Doth Paul by this manner of expression prefer natural to spiritual things. ? I think we stand or fall together. But the *Enquirer's* zeal is so great, that he seems resolved Man shall have no natural power at all. “ Let it suffice

suffice (*saiſt he*) that what he calls his firſt help, is no help at all." Some might think that he intended by this to make a living man as void of power as a dead one; but ſound reaſon, experience and chriſtianity, all concur in aſſigning to Man ſuch powers, without which he *could not* be a moral and accountable agent.

To ſhew how unfairly I have been treated, I ſhall produce ſome quotations from one of the *beſt* books of the preſent age: Intituled, *A Defence of Quakeriſm by Joſeph Beſſe, againſt P. Smith of Great Paxton in Huntingdonſhire*. It was the practice of this *Smith*, and the *Vindicator* of the Biſhop of *Litchfield* and *Coventry*, to abuſe the Quaker's writings, by citing ſcraps, and wreſting them to a ſenſe never intended; and perhaps no Man knew better how to correct ſuch tricks in authorſhip than . *J Beſſe*.

Smith had much abuſed *William Dewſberry*, upon which *J. B* obſerves thus. " His pretended long quotation from *W. D.* is ſuch an *unfair buſineſs* as makes it neceſſary for us to tranſcribe *W D's* whole diſcourſe on that head, wherein, by putting in an *italic* character, all that the Vicar has quoted; the reader will become capable of judging whether he has not expoſed to ridicule what he cannot answer: Defence of Quakeriſm page 123." Then follows *W. D's* diſcourſe, upon which page 127, *J. B.* remarks. " By this, the reader will ſee, with how much eaſe the Vicar's way of quoting, can make a Man ſay what he pleaſes, but in the meantime, how muſt that reader be impoſed on, who ſhall take his broken quotation for *William Dewſberry's* diſcourſe.

And muſt not he be as much impoſed on, who ſhall take the perverſion of my words, for my meaning?

Again, page 185. "'Tis trifling to pick a few words out of a paragraph, without regard to the reſt, and ſtrain them to a ſenſe, foreign to the plain meaning and import of the ſubject treated on."

And ſurely, to quote more fully (though not full enough)

and then split what is quoted, or *wrest* one part without regard to the other, is far from being a more just or modest way of treating any book or author whatsoever.

Appendix to the defence of Quakerism, p. 378, 379. the defender in a certain case seems to think it a considerable justification of *William Penn*, that *his meaning was made out by the whole context and the same section.*

Appendix page 379. " This quotation is also partial, " since the words both going before, and following, are " necessary to the right understanding, of *W P's* meaning." After which follows Dr. Phillip's defence of *William Penn*, against *Jenner*, concluded page 381 with this remark. " And at this rate, what may not Men say, of any person, " or religious persuasion or principles whatsoever ?

Page 397, 398, " There is a common justice due to " all authors ; and if one place of their writings may not " be admitted as an exposition of another, few of the an- " cients by an invidious critick will be found orthodox."

These citations, with the foregoing remarks may shew, that I complain not without cause. I chuse to produce them from this book, being so *pertinent* to the case, and such authorities as will hardly be disputed : And the reader may apply them as he sees occasion, to other parts of my former book.

The Enquirer seems to advance a second charge against me, saying page 4, that the *Self defence* page 3, acknowledges, " That those who absolutely exclude " providence, teach the most melancholy and " uncomfortable doctrine that can be advanced." But he says *I should have considered that those who partially exclude G O D's providence, teach a doctrine carrying with it, somewhat of the like dark, and dismal aspect.* Hear says the *Enq.* his next words. " If it was not below Deity at " first to create, it can be no dishonour to interpose as he " sees meet afterwards " These words he will have it, plain-ly import a partial exclusion of G O D's providence ; by representing the interposition of Deity to be only occasional, as he sees meet

meet: And adds *Enq.* page 5, "How far such a partial exclusion of providence is consistent with the belief of the omnipresence, and omniscience of the supreme being, who created all things, and upholdeth all things by the word of his power; who is before all things, and by whom all things consist; I forbear to determine at present, but am of opinion, that it deserves this writer's most serious consideration"

The writer thus admonished, having seriously considered the matter, is of opinion; those expressions are easily defensible and perfectly orthodox; excluding providence *no farther* than he is pleased to exclude himself: The words under censure, *as he sees meet*, do I think very fully, if not self evidently support themselves. By the words *inspect* and *superintend*, may be understood that God knows, regards and sees continually all things; and by repairing and preserving, and otherways interposing, may be fairly intended his doing all things in time and eternity, both in temporal and spiritual concerns, as his unerring wisdom sees meet. And therefore the words in dispute, *as he sees meet*, may without any violence, be understood of the *different ways* wherein God *hath been, is, or may be* pleased to manifest his providence *to, or* among his creatures, sometimes in mercy, sometimes in judgment, without calling his omnipresence or omniscience in question.

It cannot be supposed, that the Almighty interposes in every case the same when circumstances greatly differ; otherwise because *Balaam's* beast uttered words on a certain occasion, we might expect, without a like exigence *every* such animal to do the like. Divine grace, which is an interposition may strive with Man for a long season, and be afterwards wholly withdrawn. The righteous are in many respects the peculiar care of heaven, while the wicked go without many blessings, conditionally designed them. It pleased God in the beginning of *Saul's* reign to be his director, and refuse afterwards to condescend to instruct, or assist him, in the methods of divine manifestation chiefly used in that age of the world: Did not God therefore interpose and withdraw *occasionally* as he saw meet? and do not my words admit of every

every interposition that is, or can be agreeable to infinite wisdom? Would the *Eng.* have GOD interpose in every different case the same, or in any case further than he sees meet? The omnipresence of GOD is essentially perpetual, an interposition I think is not so, the very term seems to *imply* something done occasionally, and the nature of the thing speaks the same language. Different conditions of Men, yea of the same Man, require different treatment from the almighty. Where then is my error? or who can carry his notions of a providence, or GOD's interposition further than I do; without supposing it (as too many do) exerted to the diminution instead of the exaltation of GOD's glory. Wherefore, I do not see wherein, the Apostle's words, *of GOD's upholding all things by the word of his power &c.* are the least contradiction to me; unless he thereby intended, the ordination, and bringing to pass all the good and evil in the world; all that Man can think, say, or do. A vile sentiment indeed. I am no wiser than to think, it would be preposterously foolish and prophane- to suppose deity doth, or did interfere, to give victory in every battle a *Broughton's*, or scolding-bout at *Billingsgate*. Art and strength, impudence and strong lungs, decide I believe chiefly in such cases. A superior degree of strength we see in a common way, upon common principles of *nature* and *reason*, overcome the lesser; though I deny not in many instances, some perhaps not much suspected, a secret interposing hand of divine providence; as well as in others a more obvious manifestation of divine power, of which scripture furnisheth many wonderful instances. Nor do I suppose the providence of GOD, ever to be wholly withdrawn from his creation, but that in a very good sense, he upholdeth all things by the word of his power, and preserves them in great order and harmony, from that *ruin* and desolation, which we may believe the great adversary of his works, hath power and malice sufficient to bring upon them, did not GOD's own hand *continually* support and sustain. It is to his goodness we are indebted for the admirable faculties of our minds, and the exquisite frame of our bodies, though we should ever so wickedly in both, *dis honour the great giver and maker*.

And as nothing short of divine power created Man and all

all things; the more deeply Philosophers of a serious turn of mind have look'd into nature, the more have they been led to believe a secret divine agency perpetually active for perfecting, and preserving natural things. And as God may sometimes chastize and fight against sinful Men, by inverting or disturbing the very order of the common blessings and elements of *life, air, earth, fire and water*. The evil spirit, if it should please God measurably to withdraw his providence from the creation, may sometimes bring great disorders and confusions into nature, both mental and corporeal. What do we think of the case of Job, and the great numbers of persons possessed with devils in the time of our Saviour Christ upon earth: And alas! how many storms and tempests and *strange things* that have come to pass since, may have had the same source and spring? But to return.

I do not see, how any sober rational christian, can believe more of a special or general providence than I do, without inferring dangerous, and diabolical consequences, such as making God a party in, or approver of sin. Some there are so infatuated with error, that while they believe the almighty a mere Sovereign, undetermined in his œconomy by truth or moral rectitude, can fancy themselves his favourites, to sit down securely in glory, while they can calmly (I will call it stupid cruelty) acquiesce in the (supposed) reprobation of the bulk of mankind, making according to their faith, Deity run in the *horrible circle of ordaining unchangeably what unchangeably hates*. I believe the *Enq.* abhors this, yet such company in some measure *must* he keep, who carries his notions of God's interpositions one jot beyond *what God sees meet*, because it is quite impossible for Deity to interpose beyond this rule, without forsaking and clashing with his own infinite wisdom.

It were possible if necessary, to enlarge and exemplify exceedingly on this head, but I leave it to attend the *Enquirer* in his explications of the precepts of Christ; which he will have to be literally understood: And because I had argued against this sense, he charges me *Enq.* page 16, with abusing (Self defence page 6, 7, 8) the most "excellent precepts, by attempting to charge upon them such consequences

“ quences as only arise from the unwillingness of Men to
 “ put them in practice. A universal obedience to these pre-
 “ cepts in their literal acceptation, would be the greatest
 “ of blessings to mankind.

I take this to be no argument, but meer *sophistry*. Were it certain that Men would always act right, all laws would be unnecessary; but seeing they often do wrong, human law with *penalties annexed* are more necessary in such an evil and corrupt, than under a pure and perfect state of things: And I presume the government of GOD and of all wise and good Men will accordingly differ. Did youth observe the good orders of their tutors, there would be no breach of order, or need of correction; but can it thence follow, that such as are refractory shall not be restrained by correction? The *self-defence*, in the pages quoted, or alluded to by the *Eng.* was shewing, that according to the literal sense of the precepts no Man (*in the present state of things*) could call any thing his own, and would be reduced to the greatest extremities, which is so true, that he who contends for this sense is the abuser of these excellent precepts, because productive of terrible absurd consequences. Though the *Eng.* is I think afterwards in his explications of the precepts, so kind, or forgetful, or compelled to give up the literal sense.

Even all punishments human and divine may be abolished by his manner of reasoning. Suppose a person should say, that CHRIST had commanded his followers to be holy, just, and good, to have no government or punishments; and to possess all things in common: What arguments could be urged to shew the danger of such a doctrine, which such a mistaken Man might not silence in the way, or words of the *Enquirer*; viz. *A universal obedience to this doctrine would be the greatest blessing to mankind.*

Should we be told, that GOD's not punishing the wicked hereafter, to distinguish them from the good, would reflect highly on his wisdom and justice; the same kind of arguing will do here also; viz. *This is to abuse the most merciful doctrine, by attempting to fix upon it such consequences as only arise from the wickedness of Men; for were all good and grate-*

ful in return for so merciful a doctrine, it would be the greatest of blessings to mankind. But the question I think is not, what would be the consequence of universal piety, but what is to be done for the good of society, and the honour of GOD's government, and Man's too, of moral agents, when these agents become immoral and wicked.

And as to *giving* and *lending*, the true design of *both* in the precept, must be to do good, not evil. And if all Men were holy just and good, all criminal causes of want being removed, their wants would be more unfrequent, and might be easily and safely supplied by others, who in their turn might rely on the like benevolence. But what is this to the present state of things? That which is prudent and safe in one case, may be the *reverse* in another. Would the *Engl* lend a vile spendthrift twenty pounds, as freely as he would an honest diligent Man, who would be as careful to pay, as to borrow? If the honest industrious Man, who has a family, whom it is his duty to maintain, should in obedience to the literal sense of the precept, give or lend his all, to a sot, he would much injure his family & the sot too, by encouraging his vice. And I suppose it would be thought a poor excuse, if such a *simple* lender or giver, should say, he did it in obedience to the precept, because a universal obedience there-to in its literal acceptation would be the greatest of blessings to mankind. It must surely be indiscreet and criminal, to defraud the honest and virtuous of their right on the one hand, to encourage vice and immorality on the other; which will be the consequence of conforming to the literal sense of the precept. And such a Man, instead of finding the never-failing fund recommended by the *Engl* page 25, would be greatly disappointed and fall under the apostolical censure. *He that provides not for his own household hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.* In which case Paul's doctrine, and the literal sense of the precept must be *opposite*; and this precept I take to have *far more* excellence and usefulness in its limited, than literal acceptation, as the *former* duly comply'd with, will *answer* all the good purposes, and *avoid* all the pernicious consequences to which the latter will often expose the best, to the encouragement

ragement of sin and idleness &c. *in abundance* in the worst part of mankind. But I shall anon be more close with the *Enq.* on this head, of *giving, lending, and selling all*, to give all away. In the mean time I acknowledge, the power of God is able to protect under all hardships; and were this precept by our Lord positively and *undeniably* dispensed in its literal sense; obedience to it, and reliance upon God, would be a christian's *indispensible* duty, let the consequences be never so terrible. But yet I think, the doctrine of divine providence, may be mistaken and carried too far on one hand, as well as contemned and *sighted* on the other. And that our Friends neither have, nor do accept this precept literally, is evident from their general practice, ancient and modern: And whatever favour or indulgence, present or future, it may have pleased God to afford the sincere under their mistakes, I do not now think *his providence can in all points, be so rationally expected to succour where Men intend well under error, as when they mean well and believe rightly; when their zeal is according to true knowledge: To suppose otherways, seems to imply, that *truth* and *error*, are *alike* to the Deity, which is impossible. And tho' him that errs, may sometimes have the same good intention as him that errs not, yet truth will ever be more worthy the divine regard than error. And tho' I doubt not, but many persons hold several errors innocently, yet such in many cases are the means afforded for knowledge, that we should be very cautious how we pronounce error innocent in our selves or others, seeing there may be so many *latent*, blameable causes of it, some of which, we may have overlook'd, or forgot, though nothing of this sort can escape the cognizance of our sovereign judge.

The *Enq.* p. 15. tells us, “ that an argument brought
“ from the present evil state of things can be of no force;
“ that the practice of the worst sort of Men, can be no
justifiable

* Upon better consideration, I have found reason to alter my judgment upon this point, as the Reader may see, comparing what I now write, with what was laid down Self Defence. P. 43. 44. concerning Providence.

“justifiable precedent for the best sort of Men to follow.
 “That self denial, and patiently sustaining, temporal inconveniences, is a christian duty,” of which he says I
 “take no notice; though the self defence p. 5. Allows the gospel,
 “to require a meek and forbearing temper of mind; and p. 8. 9. in many instances to suffer wrong;
 “to be meek, merciful and forbearing; to bear, or pass
 “by as far as is possible or convenient all sorts of injuries
 “or abuses.”

If all this imports no self denial, the *Enq.* hath not wronged me. And in regard to the other: Properly to oppose and restrain vice, or bad example, is so far from following either, that not to do it in some cases, would be tacitly to encourage both; which is too near a kin to imitating them. And notwithstanding all that can be ever so speciously urged, a christian's behaviour (without following evil example) under an evil and corrupt state of things, will often of prudence and necessity, *differ much* from what it might safely be, did virtue universally reign. But let us now attend the *Enq. new definition of literal acceptation.*

“By literal acceptation I intend (says he, p. 16.) the
 “plain and obvious sense, which the words convey to the
 “common understanding of Men. Which sense, I apprehend ought to be admitted in all the moral precepts
 “of christianity; otherwise Men will be left in inextricable difficulties respecting the regulation of their conduct. Nor is it probable that our SAVIOUR Matt.
 “vii. 24. would have referred to those sayings of his, as the rule of a wise Man's obedience in any other sense,
 “than that of their usual acceptation. And as 'tis frequent in the new Testament writings, to express the
 “same precept for substance in different words, that is
 “to be regarded as the literal sense, which these several
 “forms of expression concur in conveying.”

One might hence judge, that in his opinion *no one* moral precept is explicit enough to direct our practice, for if this were the case, what need of minding the several forms of words, to ascertain the sense of either, seeing
 the

the same thing may be explicitly conveyed by different forms of words. However, it is too *remarkable* to be overlooked, that the *Eng.* having before insisted on the literal sense of the precepts, and charged me with abusing them, now brings forth a definition of literal acceptation, in the main more consistent with my former explications of the precepts, than with their literal sense. A definition that is loose, not peculiar to the literal sense of scripture, as I think it should, to be a just definition. It may indeed be allowed a good definition of the true sense or acceptation of all scripture, whether moral or divine; provided the meaning of such scriptures without further aid, was *designed* to be conveyed to the common understanding of Men, Against which I have some *objection*, (tho I would not too much depreciate human understanding) believing that Men relying too much on their own understanding, in forming their faith upon what has seemed to be the plain and obvious sense of the words of scripture, has produced such *diversity* and *contrariety* of opinion, whereby they have not only contradicted each other, but *themselves*. And I do believe the precepts of our LORD, as well as some of his parables and exhortations, are not so clear to the common understandings of Men, but that they may sometimes need illustration by the immediate teachings of GOD's spirit. I will not say, the *Eng.* has here designedly exalted human understanding and the letter of scripture, in derogation from that holy inspeaking word of life, whereby the one must be *illuminated*, for the other to be understood; but I think it seems plain, when a different purpose was to be served, he was p. 64. 65. more orthodox, where he tells us, " that
 " in our enquiries after truth, we ought to have a special
 " regard to the guidance of the spirit of truth, which God
 " has promised to those who ask it &c."

The precept, *resist not evil*, &c. the *Eng.* p. 17. says, *prohibits wars*; and this I suppose he takes to be a moral precept; but I rather take it to be a divine precept (if an illiterate person may be allowed to make such a distinction) because it is a religious duty, required by divine revelation, *over and beyond* the laws of nature, or any reciprocal moral duties, arising from the moral relations whereby Mankind
 are

are mutually tied together. And so far in my judgment is the full meaning of this precept, from being conveyed by the words of it, to the common understandings of Men, that I think the brightest human capacity *insufficient* without divine light, to ascertain its meaning for the regulation of our conduct; and that *the plain and obvious sense and common understanding* which is talked of to prevent our falling into inextricable difficulties, will, if relied on, bring these very difficulties upon us, as they have abundantly done upon others. What Man alive, can pretend to *see*, or to *say*, that by this precept &c. we are fully and clearly taught, that 'tis unchristian to fight in any case; but yet that we may use family authority, discipline and correction, and even the law too in some cases, to *punish evil*, and *preserve property*. However, I take liberty in this place, to offer what seems to me, a truer definition of literal acceptation than the *Enquirer's*.

By literal acceptation, I intend without force or figure, *the very thing, or things expressed by the letter of scripture, and all other things undeniably and necessarily implied*, whether it or they agree with, or contradict the common understandings of men. For instance, *resist not evil*, &c. obliges me if smitten on the right cheek to turn the other, and by *unavoidable* implication equally prohibits resistance, if I am first smitten on the left cheek, head or nose, &c. And if a Man sues me at law to take away my *hat*, or *inheritance*, I can no more (without breach of the literal sense) contest it in law, than if sued for my *coat*; the like is true of the other precepts.

I take this definition to be better than my friend's; because mine I think is *peculiar* to the literal sense; his far from being so. If I should give a definition of an horse, agreeing as well to a quite different creature, a philosopher would call it a bad definition. And that which the *Enq.* gives of literal acceptation seems as wide of the mark, because as *applicable* to the figurative and metaphorical as to the literal sense of scripture. Let us apply it to other parts of the New Testament which are manifestly figurative.

CHRIST

CHRIST is called a *door* and a *vine*, the literal sense of which would be, that he is so *outwardly*, yet the obvious sense which the words convey to the common understanding, of unprejudic'd Men, is manifestly figurative; Christ being these things only in an inward and spiritual sense. The same holds good when he saith, *John vi. 53. Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.* And if ever the same things in substance are laid down in scripture concerning him, all the several forms of expression, concur in conveying to the common understandings of Men, not a literal, but spiritual or figurative meaning. Nor does it appear to me, that any various forms of expression, appertaining to the moral precepts of God and CHRIST, did then, or do now convey in all cases a sense or meaning strictly literal. In some cases the true sense and application, may be left to be made and explicated by a spiritual guide. In others be more obvious, yet not always literal and I shall not deny but that it may be sometimes both obvious and literal, as when we are commanded not to *lie*, *kill*, or *steal* &c. But this literal clearness is not I think to be found in every part of the four precepts recorded by Matthew, and explicated by the *Enq.* The practice of our own society, even the wisest and best Men in it, shews as far as such authority goes, the very *reverse* in many points to this sense; which sense, the *Enq.* also departs from, or does not fully enforce in his comments or explications. And it will not only be difficult, but I think *impossible* to escape inextricable difficulties in attempting to regulate our conduct upon the literal sense; so many important duties required by the same authority, clashing with the literal, tho' not with the true sense of these precepts.

The *Enq.* page 17 begins with the first precept. *Resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek turn to him the other also;* and tells us it *prohibits wars*, which it may do, and not be absolutely literal in every other case; tho' the word *whosoever*, seems in its literal sense, an intire prohibition of all manner of resistance, or punishment of offenders whatsoever, from the *traitor* that invades the throne, to the refractory school-boy; and yet who among our selves understands it so as to deprive him of due authority over children
and

and servants, (tho' no such matter is obvious in the precept) or that he should not seek redress of some grievances by the good laws of his country? And for what I can see, he may sometimes very innocently *restrain* the hands or weapons of the *weak*, or *escape* from the strong: So that this precept is not to be taken literally in all persons times and circumstances: No external rule of this sort, can I think be laid down for all these. And I am very sure, that neither the naked precept, nor the *Enquirer's* comments upon it, give any thing like such a rule: But the holy spirit, promised by our LORD to his disciples, *John* xv. 26, to bring things, (he had before taught them) to their remembrance, and no doubt explain them, is sufficient for all who adhere to it. By this rule where necessary in aid of mankind, every variation of circumstance may be provided for, either in coming *nearer* to, or receding *further* from the literal sense in our practice; which in different persons, times and cases, cannot but be *various*, as in fact they ever have been.

The suffering patiently without resistance, under *misguided* national authority (should it so happen) would no doubt become our duty, beyond what is, or can be reasonably required in some private cases of undutiful, wicked, and base treatment; contrary not only to the most wholesome and salutary laws, but to all the endearing reciprocal ties of morality, friendship, consanguinity and gratitude, that ought to be tenderly cultivated, and subsist amongst Men.

It was said, *Self Defence* page 15 “Take the precept in St. Matthew, and this doctrine of St. Paul's, (relating to christian magistracy) both in a literal sense, and they amount to an absolute contradiction; and any Man alive may be challeng'd to shew the contrary. The precept in St. Matthew *forbids self defence*, but the power of the magistrate, said to be ordain'd of GOD *allows and commands it.*”

“This (says the *Enq.* page 31) is both pert and positive, and yet perhaps may be a mistake; for as we have already shewn, the precept in Matthew, forbids rendering evil for evil, but the justice of government in
“punishing

“punishing evil doers is good; so that the patience of a
 “private christian in bearing injuries, and the justice of
 “government in punishing evil doers, are so far from be-
 “ing contradictory, that they really concur in one and the
 “same good purpose of overcoming evil with good, the
 “one of them by the smooth and alluring motives of love
 “and good example; the other by the restraining power
 “of good laws. For as the literal meaning of the precept
 “in Matthew, prohibits only rendring evil for evil, the
 “administration of justice in a legal way being good, may
 “resist evil without any breach of that authority.”

I believe this *sophistical* way of reasoning will hardly pass
 with Men of sense for a confutation of what he calls *pert*
 and *positive*, for a mere sophism it is, and absolute depar-
 ture from the literal sense of the precept. I observe how he
 shifts or changes the words in the text, *resist not evil*, for
not rendring evil for evil, by which means some readers may
 be deceived. I admit, the magistrates punishing evil do-
 ers to be good, and by the same rule, are many private pu-
 nishments, with which it would be improper and imperti-
 nent, to trouble the magistrates tribunal. Punishing evil
 doers is good in both cases; no more a returning evil for
 evil in the one, than in the other. But how evil in either
 case, can be punished, without being resisted, or how it can
 be resisted without breach of the literal sense of the precept,
 which expressly saith, *resist not evil*, the *Enq.* should have
 demonstrated a little better, before he had been so free with
 his *pert* and *positive*.

It must be granted upon the true sense of the precept,
 which is *limitea*, that private forbearance, or suffering in
 some cases, and public justice in others, answer the *same*
 good ends. But this is no more than saying, that we may
 suffer in some cases, and resist, or punish in others; the
 very thing I had in the *self-defence* pleaded for, (save that I
 had carried the point beyond my present judgment,) strange
 indeed, that some of the very things alledged by me, should
 when urged in finer words by the *Enquirer*, be taken by any
 sensible reader as a good answer to my book. This liberty
 of punishing evil by the christian magistrate, would upon the

the literal sense be absurd. Public justice could never subsist upon this sense, no better than a court of judicature in the moon, of no more service to us than a mere nose of wax. If evil is not to be resisted, how shall a christian magistracy be formed, without supposing a number of christians vested with power to do that in a body, or by their deputies, which they are all of them singly and seperately expressly prohibited from touching and meddling with. How would such a liberty operate in the case of *swearing*, and other matters forbidden by JESUS CHRIST? But allow, a magistracy is formed; if *no resistance* be allowed, what christian can recur to the civil power, or bring offenders before the magistrate, without breach of the literal sense of the precept? For if it be literal, all manner of resistance of evil, by *one*, or *more*, or *many*, incorporated into what body, under what specious name soever, is equally forbidden. But if the magistrate may in punishing, resist evil *contrary* to the express words of the precept, without breach of the authority that dispensed it, as the *Eng.* allows, the literal sense is certainly *deserted* and given up by this zealous advocate for it, for any thing he hath yet been able to produce to the contrary.

He seems also p. 19. to have much *missed* it in another point, when he saith.---*But if he smites me, and I return the blow, he has the same pretence for his second stroke, as I had for my first.* This is putting the furious *aggressor*, on the same footing with the *aggrieved* person: Him that insults, with him that is insulted; and confounds the obvious distinction there is between *offensive* and *defensive* war. For tho' to some christianity forbids both, it is impossible they should be equally atrocious. And of this distinction he himself p. 17. seems sensible. "War *says he* considered as merely offensive, is so generally abhorrent to the nature and reason of Man, that even the worst of Men, in words usually disclaim it." And he seems to have said the reverse a few pages before: viz. p. 14. when he says, "I might find some difficulty in demonstrating what defence there is in a sword, without using it offensively." Wherein I think he endeavours without the least service to his cause, to make that difficult, which is *very obvious* to the common understanding of Men.

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He exhorts me p, 47, (for which I thank him) “ to
 “ beware of being ludicrous, and permitting the excursions
 “ of a wanton fancy, to exceed the bounds of solid judg-
 “ ment.” And thinks the imaginary case, worked up,
Self-Defence p. 28, in opposition to patience and forbearance
 to be an excursion of this sort.

“ It behoveth *saith the Enquirer* an humble christian to
 “ expect such a degree of patience as may support him un-
 “ der such wicked and provoking cases, as he shall meet
 “ with, in the *real occurrences* of human concerns, without
 “ extending his views to fictitious ones, such as this Author
 “ is obliged to invent ; and from which only he is capable
 “ of deducing an inference equally imaginary, viz. that
 “ patience would rather be a crime than a virtue.”

But with his leave, if the precept be absolutely literal in
 its design, no supposed possible case, whether it happen or
 not, can be an exception to it. The case put was of a son,
 murdering his mother, brothers, and sisters; is not this a
 possible case? are there no facts full as extraordinary in
 history? tho’ in some respects of a different nature: What
 does he think of Saul’s murdering the LORD’s Priests, set
 apart to minister in holy things? Herod’s massacre of so
 many innocent babes and little children, to cut off the
 Prince of life, whom he feared as a competitor to his
 crown? Nero’s murder of his own mother, (as well as
 many of his subjects) with the most vile curiosity said to
 have followed thereupon? I think there were in the Irish
 massacre, some circumstances of cruelty, as hellish and a-
 bominable as can easily be thought of; and no doubt a ve-
 ry moderate knowledge of history would furnish many cru-
 elties as shocking and terrible as that supposed by me, I
 have perused a late story similar to it, in a common news-
 paper, which is true for any thing I know to the contrary.

“ *Schaffhausen* in SWITZERLAND, *June 24. (1752.)*
 “ We learn from *Zurich*, that one of the gang of rogues,
 “ that infested those parts, was taken up a few days ago,
 “ and put to the torture, in order to make him impeach
 “ his accomplices; but he would only confess that he was
 “ worthy

“ worthy of death, having been so unnatural as to *poison*
 “ his father and mother and five brothers and sisters, for
 “ which he was broke on the wheel.”

This story exceeds my supposition, by adding to the tragedy a murdered father. Are such crimes to be spared by patience, or suitably punished? if the latter, how was my inference imaginary? But 'tis time to move on to the next precept.

If any Man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

The *Enq.* p. 19. 20. comments very concisely upon this precept, and my reply need not be tedious. It seems clear enough, that by the *literal* sense, all going to law is *forbidden*; the case put, being that of the coat on our backs, wherein a Man may be supposed to have a clear property. Much less can he contest an affair of more doubtful nature. But if we should, as the *Enq.* seems to do, so far depart from the literal sense, as to suppose an absolute compliance therewith not to be intended, but *such a peaceable and christian disposition of mind, as rather to submit to wrong, than be engaged in doubtful contests at law*, my former book p. 8. comes as near, or nearer to the literal sense, for it allows that *in many instances we should suffer wrong, and give up a part of real (or clear) privilege rather than be embarrassed with an envious wicked and unjust Man.*

But notwithstanding the *Enquirer* seems here to have dropped the literal sense, he resumes it again p. 20. “ sees
 “ no inconveniency in accepting this precept literally; and
 “ that the Quakers do so accept it, he (*most erroneously*)
 “ thinks apparent by the established rules of their society,
 “ by which the suing one another at law is forbidden.”

This rule of our society in prohibiting suits at law is very salutary; but if one brother defrauds another, and refuses to submit to the judgment and determination of his friends, or due arbitration, the courts of civil justice, are I believe upon our own principles and practice *open for redress*

to the aggrieved brother. A material circumstance, which the *Enq.* overlooked, or passed by without notice, as knowing its direct opposition to his purpose. He says further p. 23. "I agree with this author, in what he says p. 7. *that the authority is the same in both cases of fighting and going to law*; but then I understand the precepts of CHRIST *in both cases literally.*"

Will he then grant, that prohibiting war among our selves only, is the full literal meaning of the precept, *resist not evil*, and that we may occasionally as well go to war, as to law, with those not of our society? He must either admit this, or allow, his confining the literal sense of the precept against going to law, to our own society, to be a flat contradiction to his understanding both precepts just alike literally. However, he hath not, nor can he make his position good: For the Quakers admit not of war in any case; but the law is allowed, and hath on some occasions been used by them. In the reign of CHARLES II. when the literal sense was in as much repute as now, some of our approved friends, did not conceive themselves tied up by this precept from defending on a certain occasion their liberties and properties, in a court of justice, against the villany and perjury of those pests of society, abandoned mercenary *informers*, who in that time, as well *against good*, as according to bad laws, made cruel havock and spoil of the properties of honest Men, and good subjects. Hist. *T. Ellwood's* life, 2 Edit. p. 294. &c.

The *Enq.* hath mistaken, or misrepresented the point he was upon, and given up in effect, the literal sense of this precept also, in confining it to our own society, when it admits not of such restriction. We come now to the third precept.

"The third (*says the Enq. p. 20.*) if the foregoing precepts of CHRIST. viz. *whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain*, recommends by an obvious and familiar instance, the excellency of a loving and social temper, a readiness of mind to excel in acts of benignity and condescension, and voluntarily to exceed the expectations of others in that respect, &c." No

No words perhaps can readily be found, that in the general more *finely* express the true meaning of this precept, but they are evidently beside the literal sense. There is vast difference between exceeding in acts of benignity, the expectation of reasonable men, and an *unreserved* compliance, to the utmost of our power to the demands of unreasonable Men, many of whom would leave no room in their demands, for any one voluntarily to exceed them. And an unreserved compliance to the utmost of our ability with, and if possible *beyond* very *cruel* and unreasonable demands, seems to be the literal sense of this precept, which in this, no more than in the foregoing is confined to those of the same faith or society. The *whosoever* or *smiter* in the *first*, the *any Man* or *suer at law* in the *second*, the *compeller to go a mile* in the *third*, if they are not indefinite and universal, including all within and without the pale, most clearly predicate the evil temper and behaviour of the Men of this wicked world; and contrary to the literal meaning, acts of benignity and condescension in the true christian, must be left to his own best prudence and abilities, which in different persons and cases, will of necessity be various, without inferring disobedience to the precept, or leaving men in inextricable difficulties in the regulation of their conduct. The benignity of the most wealthy may be so far extended *abroad*; as to become a robbery or oppression at *home*; and no general precept can be allowed to clash with the particular duty, of providing for a Man's own family; both nature and religion, having made this a prime and fundamental concern.

The *Enquirer's* explication p. 21. 22. of the fourth precept: *Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away*, tho' in it self truly instructive and excellent, concludes nothing for, but *against* the literal sense, recommending acts of kindness and charity *as occasion requires*, which takes in the ability of the giver or lender on one hand, and the merits or wants of the *asker* or *borrower* on the other, (precisely conformable to my former book on this head,) not that a christian's substance is made at the service, or the property of every worthless importunate asker or borrower.

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He saith also p. 25. that *where one wants, what the other hath, the injunction abides in force.* If by this, is only meant what can prudently be spared, and may be suitably bestowed, I am not contradicted, much less confuted. And from the words *as occasion requires* in his explication, and what he says p. 25. that my objection *Self-Defence* p. 8. “ that
 “ the text does not oblige christians both to give and lend
 “ without having regard to the merit, and wants of the ask-
 “ er or borrower, or even to our own circumstances,”
may be allowed without receding from the literal sense, it looks as if he and I disagree about nothing here, except it be the literal sense, or what it is, that constitutes this sense. How far he agrees with, or *contradicts* himself upon this subject, the reader may judge, when some other expressions of this author are laid before him. We have already a few pages back, remarked a little upon this subject of giving and lending, and shall now add something further.

The *Enq.* p. 24. cites from the *Self-Defence* p. 7, the following words. “ There are many substantial men a-
 “ mong the Quakers, who were they to conform literally,
 “ to the injunction of giving and lending, would soon be
 “ impoverished, and made needy themselves by the con-
 “ stant demands of worthless and indigent persons.” *His answer to this is.*

“ But if he will consider this precept in its true light,
 “ as an injunction of mutual duty, to be not only strictly
 “ and literally, but also reciprocally conformed to among
 “ christians in general; he may see the impoverish-
 “ ment and need he suggests, immediately provided for,
 “ by the voluntary contributions of others, under the like
 “ obligation of a reciprocal performance of the same offi-
 “ ces; by means whereof instead of poverty and want, will
 “ arise a secure and perpetual fund of never failing charity.”

According to his concessions mentioned above, agreeable to my former reasoning on this point of giving and lending *as occasion requires*, according to ability and circumstance on one hand, and the merits and wants of the asker or borrower on the other, there was no need to admit of the

want

want and impoverishment I had suggested, because if the above rules be observed no person is under obligation to answer the demands of the worthless and indigent, further than can be spared. My reasoning was founded on the literal sense, the observance of which I take to be productive of the poverty and want suggested, because by this sense him that has any substance is obliged to give or lend whenever it is required, and by whomsoever, as long as he hath any thing left. And should we agree with the *Enquirer* to restrict the literal sense to the society of christians only, even then, according to his own concessions, such as give and lend, may make a due reserve for themselves, and not by an imprudent liberality expose themselves to want. The literal sense, in all the four precepts I take to extend to any one, whether within or without the pale, who *smites*, or *sues at law*, or *compels*, or wants to *beg* or *borrow*, tho' they all may seem to have the most immediate relation to the Men of this world. For as in the three forementioned precepts, the literal sense is not to be restricted within the verge of our own, or any single profession of christianity, neither can this of giving and lending be so confined in its application. But *ancient practice*, so far from complying with the full literal sense, did not perhaps come up to the *Enq.* restricted sense. In the primitive time, when the spirit of love and benevolence *ran high*, we find the christians of their own *free will*, not by constraint, or in obedience to any absolute authority requiring it of them, selling their lands to raise a common fund for the supply of the *body*. I say, not by constraint, because *Peter* told *Ananias* the money or price *was his own*, which strictly speaking, it *could not* have been, if by any law, or precept of *CHRIST*, every christian be obliged to bring his *all* into a common fund; but 'tis plain, *Ananias*, his sin, lay not in withholding a part, but in concealing it by a lie, to have the credit of resigning the whole voluntarily. The disposal of this fund, was under the direction of proper persons, who distributed to every Man as he had need; not suffering the necessitous of the same faith to take out according to their own pleasure; *much less*, can it be supposed, the children of this world, were freely allowed to lay their rapacious hands on whatsoever they pleased. And in the after apostolick days,

as we may read in *Paul's* writings, matters were never carried higher, if so high in this sort of beneficence; nor do I find, they are, or ever have been, in our own society extended so far, as in that memorable time recorded in the acts of the apostles, tho' we may have had many useful funds for the relief of the poor, and other good purposes generously raised, and put under the management of men fearing *GOD* and hating covetousness. This short account, I thought proper to give of the primitive, and our own practice in this matter.

The want and impoverishment suggested by me, was such as might naturally arise from a conformity to the literal sense, whereby the very best and wealthiest might become a prey to the worst and wickedest, who if they had it in their power, might have have *no inclination* to refund, being strangers to justice and gratitude, in which case the *Enquirer's* neverfailing fund would *nowhere* be found. And how this want and impoverishment upon my argument and literal construction of the precept, is fully provided for, by his supposition and restricted acceptance, which is so restricted and foreign to *mine*, may require some skill to demonstrate. It may be, that so far from providing for the dreadful want and impoverishment, arising from the literal sense as urged by me, he hath by no means provided for the want and impoverishment arising from his own restricted acceptance of the precept.

It may be observed, his *never failing fund*, is not according to himself, to be made as in the primitive time, nor yet such funds by which our poor are relieved by the society; but a *certain support* to be relied on, from the voluntary reciprocal duties and offices of love and charity, in *others*, after our own bounty, by giving and lending has reduced us to want and impoverishment: But I think as the case now stands among us as a people, it is a fund little better than the *South-Sea* bubble. And let the *Enquirer* write as he pleases, neither himself, nor his most sanguine admirers, will ever put this doctrine in practice, by giving and lending at the pleasure of all askers and borrowers of our own profession, who, tho' under strong obligations to make

make reciprocal returns, when in their power, yet there is now in the society, persons *numerous, poor, and base* enough, by begging and borrowing if comply'd with, to impoverish the whole society, without having either the means or inclination for that reciprocal supply, which the *Enq.* calls a *never failing fund of charity*. But I take leave to say, I never knew the Man, who conformed, or I believe would so do in practice, to this restricted sense of the *Enq.* and were the bold and indigent among our selves, to offer to beg and borrow accordingly, of the humble and rich, they would treat such applications as great *insolence*, and their own compliance as folly or *madness*. It is much easier to make a fine parade with words upon paper, than to put what we say in practice. But to hear Men, who if ever they give or lend, do it *sparingly* and with great precaution, *insisting* on the literal acceptation of this precept, is quite *extraordinary*, and shews plainly, they assent without thinking, or what is worse, contradict in practice deliberately, their own settled principles. And as there is nothing like applying things home, I would seriously ask this Author, if he hath *resigned*, or is willing as things now are, to resign his substance, at the pleasure of such of the same society, who may think fit to beg or borrow, or knoweth he any that hath done it? No doubt he retains what he hath, as believing it would be great folly and imprudence to resign his property as aforesaid. And I conceive the same prudence bounds his liberality in giving and lending in the *very manner* laid down in my former book.

The *Enq.* by confining the acts of giving and lending within the limits of our own, or the christian society, takes a liberty, neither expressed, nor imply'd in the words of the precept, and so has deviated from the full literal sense on the one hand, and exceeded the real meaning of the precept on the other.

It seems hard to say, a writer's expressions are of *uncertain and doubtful meaning*, when the case he is speaking of, admits of no certain or universal criterion; which in giving and lending, can no more be established, than one universal regimen of diet, degrees of exercise, or yearly expence

for all Mankind. Yet so averſe is the *Enquirer* to words of doubtful meaning, and ſo fond of a criterion, even where it is not to be had, that he hath ſelected a moſt extraordinary caſe indeed, wherewith to adjust this diſpute about charity. A caſe, that ſeems to *forego*, and *root up*, all his own conceſſions in favour of giving and lending in the manner laid down in my former book.

The caſe he hath choſen, is no leſs than that of the rich young man in the goſpel. His words p. 43. are as followeth. “ He (*the writer of the Self Defence*) tells us p. 24. “ that all virtues have their bounds; but he errs in aſſign-
“ ing the proper extent of them, when he makes the vir-
“ tues of *giving* and *lending*, meerly ſubſervient to the con-
“ veniences of a Man, and his family; whereas our SAVI-
“ OUR himſelf, extends them to the utmoſt, not of Mens
“ conveniences, but of their abilities. *If*, ſays our LORD
“ to a rich Man, Matt. xix. 21. *thou wilt be perfect, go*
“ *and ſell all that thou haſt, and give to the Poor, and thou*
“ *ſhalt have treaſure in heaven, and come and follow me.* But
“ this advice not ſuiting his convenience, he went away
“ ſorrowful, having too much of this world’s riches to part
“ with them. This giving up his all, is a *criterion*, that
“ will ſuit every Man; becauſe it makes every Man’s abi-
“ lity, be it more or leſs, the meaſure of his charity.”

This is quite aſtoniſhing, and in my view, ſo far from being a *criterion* ſuitable to every Man, as hardly to ſuit any Man, without the like *ſpecial* command. And as he inſiſts p. 16. 17. on the excellency of a *universal literal acceptation* of the precepts, let us conſider this inſtance as univerſally binding on all. As every Man of ſubſtance is hereby obliged to ſell, common ſenſe might aſk, where are the buyers? Let us then ſubſtitute *giving* inſtead of *ſelling* all; yet if this be alſo univerſal, he that takes, muſt give away all he takes or receives, without reſerving a part for his own uſe; for if he is allowed to do this, by the ſame rule, might the firſt giver or ſeller, have done ſo too; and this I think will bring the *Enq.* to giving and lending, according to prudence and circumſtance, &c. as the ſelf defence ſpeaks; and *down goes* (with the literal ſenſe of the precept) his univerſal *criterion*, which
he

he says is suitable to every Man. Tho' there is no manner of absurdity in giving or selling all, in a case so special and peculiar as that in the text, and relying on God's providence for a temporal support, and his promise for eternal life. What the criterion recommended, seems to be an *impossibility*, and contradiction in practice, and cannot therefore be a universal and positive duty.

But seeing the *Enquirer* is so tenacious on this point, it may well be asked, if he himself, hath done according to his *criterion*; or knoweth he any that hath done so? In truth while his hand was in, he might have urged, the command to Abraham to offer up his son, as a universal duty. For both this and the other, were singular peculiar commands, one of them *never intended* to be put in execution, the other *not designed* for a rule or pattern to others. Neither of them can be binding, to any Man, except expressly commanded, and by *no means* capable of being urged as examples for general practice. And I believe this Author not finding in either case a special injunction to himself, hath spared his son, and retained his substance, and he ought by the same rule to have spared or with-held this ranting amazing argument.

Having followed him through the four precepts, I shall now make an observation on two, sparing several others, lest I should be thought too severe.

In p. 24. under all insults and abuses, *an invincible patience is said to be the only gospel remedy*. But its said p. 51. the precept of CHRIST *resist not evil, may be understood to establish magistracy*. So, here is first an only remedy, and then another remedy. P. 16. 17. he affirms, *that a universal obedience to these precepts in their literal acceptation, would be the greatest of blessings to Mankind*. But as this blessing is not peculiar to the literal sense, it helps not his argument. There is one construction or consequence, from whence this blessing arises, *common* to both the limited and literal sense. The one forbids all resistance, the other requires much patience and forbearance, and both agree in this, that no Man should insult or offend, or offer offensively, the least

evil to another. Wherefore a universal obedience to these precepts (the first three especially) in their limited sense, as well as in their literal, *would be the greatest of blessings to Mankind*; who would necessarily live in profound peace and quiet. At the same time, in the present imperfect state of things, this restricted sense, *avoids* many great evils to which a literal construction would subject the best of Men.

The *Enq.* p. 42. says, that my former book asserts p. 24. *that every virtue carried beyond a certain pitch, loses its nature and becomes vice.* “ But this I think (says the *Enq.*) to be a “ mistake, and that the nature of virtue has such a *contrariety* to that of vice, as is utterly incapable of any such “ transmutation, or transubstantiation, that the one of “ them, can ever become the other of them. I have always thought, that the greatest degree of virtue, was at “ the furthest distance from vice, and that the frailty and “ infirmity of Man is such, as that he need not apprehend “ any danger of extending his practice of virtue to an excess. Our author’s guarding against that is *unnecessary*; “ and ’tis *unreasonable*, because, ’tis not the *excess*, but *defect* of virtue that borders on vice.”

Tho’ the writer of the self-defence, might to a weak dissingenuous reader, seem to advance such contradictory stuff, as the transmutation of virtue into vice, yet care was taken to make his meaning clear and orthodox; for the very next words to those which the *Enq.* hath pick’d out and wrested, are as follows. “ Giving and lending, are virtues, and commanded in the same unlimited manner; “ and yet if a Man of a thousand pounds per annum, and “ a large family, should bestow as much on the poor, as “ his neighbour, who is possessed with double his income “ can conveniently spare, he goes beyond the bounds of “ virtue. (*now observe what follows*) It *does not*, properly “ and strictly speaking, convert the whole act into vice; “ but whatever is given, beyond that which can be spared “ without injuring himself and family, is so far from being “ virtuous, that it is in itself wrong and vicious.” And p. 25. 26. “ The truth is, forbearance as well as giving “ and lending, may be carried to an excess, and once got
beyond

“ beyond its due bounds, the borders of vice are enter’d upon, and the action continued takes another name and another nature.”

Behold reader, and admire ! as well thou may’st, at this singular violation of that common justice, which is due to all authors and their writings. I appeal to common sense and candour, if my words were not suitably secured from such abuse.

As to the words he uses, *excess of virtue*, and *defect of virtue*, they are not, *I believe* my expressions, nor perhaps defensible. So great a casuist if I dont mistake, as the present BISHOP of WINCHESTER, told his Adversary SNAPE, that an *excess of goodness was an absurdity in terms* ; and is not the defect of goodness the same ? How can that which is *excessive* or *defective* be strictly and properly filed good ? However, in a low, and qualified sense, the words *excess* and *defect* of virtue, may be perhaps allowed. Yet I think, *higher* and *lower* degrees of virtue, are terms more unexceptionable, because they dont seem to infer so much as *excess* and *defect*. The gifts of divine grace, are various in degree, yet the least is perfect in its kind, as is the virtue, or goodness in our practice arising therefrom.

It was practical virtue, the virtue of *giving*, which the self-defence was treating of, and surely the highest as well as the lowest degree of it borders upon vice. Tho’ it must also be allowed, that considering virtue as the happy mean betwixt extreams, it is at the furthest distance from vice on either hand. Yet there may be few cases assignable, where the *excess* as well as the *defect* of virtue doth not border on vice, or in other words, the *highest* as well as the *lowest* degrees of virtue, border on their *neighbour* vices, and are each of them at the greatest distance from their opposite vices. The *highest* liberality borders on profuseness, the *lowest* on covetousness. The highest liberality, is at as great a distance from covetousness, as the lowest from profuseness. Frugality is also a virtue, the highest degree of it borders on covetousness, the lowest on profuseness. Here are the same vices at the extreams as in the other case, only they are
here

here transposed or inverted. Covetousness was there at *bottom*, here it stands *above*. Profuseness which there stood above, is here placed below; which proceeds from the *contrast* there is between liberality and frugality. For there is a contrast between some virtues, as well as between virtue and vice. I might (and have by me, but suppress them as superfluous) produce several other things in my own defence. And perhaps the virtues, both *mental* and *practical*, or generally so, are on both sides bounded by extreams. I say generally, because I believe the love of GOD, can *never* be too great in our hearts; so unspeakable are our obligations to love him; so infinitely adorable and lovely is he.

That virtue is at the greatest distance from vice, is not only to be admitted by considering virtue as the happy mean between extreams, but also in the disposition of the mind, and the different motives, whereon virtue and vice proceed, where the outward acts may border on each other. Even ostentation and interest in some, will occasionally do the very *same* acts of kindness, that flow in others from true liberality and charity. We see then in a good sense, that virtue is in some cases at the greatest distance from vice, and in others, the *highest* and *lowest* degrees of some practical virtues, are on each side bounded by their neighbour vices. I hope also it hath been made plain, that *giving* and *lending*, tho' virtues, and laudible when exercised within due bounds, may be carried to such *excess* as to become quite wrong, and deserve another name, because they assume another nature. And how much soever from the poverty of words, or my want of skill, this matter may be left obscure, the main argument is I think undeniably strong and clear against the *Eng.* who seems not, as he ought to have done in the case of giving and lending, (the very matter in dispute,) to have consider'd virtue or goodness rightly, as the happy mean between extreams; and that Men leaving this rule may deviate or err on either side. And in the case before us, such kindness and liberality, as is in the main suitable to our own circumstances, *is this mean*, between the extreams of giving or lending too little, or too much. For a rich Man may surely do either, if he be obliged by christianity, to be kind and liberal on the one hand, and to provide for himself and

and family on the other. But as there may be some difficulty in assigning to a farthing what a rich Man can spare, the *Enq.* may have recourse to his *criterion* above mentioned.

In the last place, what he says, *that there was no danger of Mans extending his practice of virtue to an excess, &c.* seems quite unsound, as it was the *virtue* of giving or lending, which was there treated of. The very nature of the argument, or to illustrate it, which the self-defence was prosecuting, naturally led the author into such a method of arguing; tho' it was not intended to deter the miser from being liberal, his frailty and infirmity being such as requires very different advice; and indeed the rich world in common is deaf to misery and distress. But yet I believe there have been, and are, persons of such frailty and infirmity, as need to be well *caution'd* against too large beneficence. Hath not matter of fact, and the wisdom of parliament, proclaimed aloud the reverse to the *Enquirer*? The *former* in the numerous extensive donations bequeathed by the laity under ecclesiastical influence, to the extream prejudice, if not beggary of next heirs and near of kin. The *latter* in the *Mort-main Act*, framed on purpose to prevent this excess, which had formerly so much abounded, and of later time beyond the approbation of our legislators. Yet no such public authority can effectually set stop on the springs of these, and many other private improper benevolences. We have reason to fear, there are (as well as covetous who hate to give or lend) but too many of Mankind, who superstitiously and ignorantly, in the room of repentance and conversion, endeavour both *living* and *dying*, to *commute* with the *ALMIGHTY* for their sins, by unadvised appropriations of their substance; and in many other instances, may Men be imprudently and unjustifiably liberal. Wherefore I presume the *Enquirer's* reflections are some of them very unfair; and others indigested and premature, upon this subject.

The next thing to be consider'd is the precept of *CHRIST*; *take no thought for the morrow*. Now the self-defence, p. 10. having asserted, "that all wise and good men, take some care and thought for the morrow, 'tis their

“ their duty to do so,” the *Enq.* p. 27. gives me the following reprehension.” “ I apprehend that this author doth not express a becoming reverence for the precept of CHRIST when he represents it as literally, opposite to the duty of Man. The express words of our SAVIOUR are, *take no thought for the morrow.* Thus he asserts, that ’tis the duty of all wise and good Men, to do what the precept of our SAVIOUR, expressly and literally prohibits. This amounts to a flat contradiction, such as I think christian prudence cannot admit.”

With how much ease does he prove this point against me, from the meer literal sense of the precept? nor can it be said he hath no similar authorities, such as they are to justify him. For it is by adhering to the literal sense of scripture, that the *Papists* endeavour to prove *one* impossibility and the *Muggeltonians* another. *This is my body,---and except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, &c.* are scriptures urged in their literal sense for transubstantiation; and the *Papists* so believing, did apprehend the *reformers* figurative interpretation, to be a flat irreverent contradiction, to the express words of CHRIST.

The *Muggeltonians*, who are professed enemies to the very notion of spiritual incorporeal intelligent beings maintain, the corporeal person of JESUS CHRIST, to be the one eternal GOD, and that he *really* died upon the Cross. This they think to prove from *Rev.* i. 17. 18. *I am the first and the last, I am he that liveth and was dead.* Now neither of these texts prove what they are produced for, and ’tis possible the *Enquirer* may be also mistaken.

We find the *Corinthians*, were directed by the Apostle Paul, to lay by their bounty before hand for the relief of their poor brethren; and doing thus, beyond the *morrow* for others, they doubtless took the like care of themselves, for I suppose no man is obliged to love his neighbour better than himself. By the *morrow* then in scripture language, may perhaps be sometimes understood a longer time to come than the *next day*, or, by *taking no thought for*

the morrow, not being over anxious about future temporal concerns. And tho' the *Enq.* is so strenuous for the literal sense, yet so strong is truth, and so great the absurdity of this sense, that p. 26. he says, *we should not be anxious, &c.* the very thing I contend for; and in what follows p. 27. the whole affair may seem to be quite given up. "So that *saieth he*, the "text which forbids taking thought for the morrow, "tho' taken literally, doth not exclude human care "and industry, but limits it within its proper sphere "of dependance on the providence of *G O D*, which "ever includes, both the *means* and the *end* of what- "soever conduceth to the support of the creatures "which he hath made."

These words, *whatsoever conduceth, &c.* most evidently imply a care for the morrow; because without this care, many things *conducting to our support* will be totally neglected, as we shall fully shew. But we shall first attend another argument if I may so call it, of the *Enquirer's*, who to support the literal sense of this precept, urges a part of that prayer which CHRIST taught his disciples; viz. *Give us this day our daily bread*; and says p. 28. "the limitation of this petition to the present days supply, exactly corresponds with the prohibition of taking thought for the morrow; establishes the necessity of a continual dependance on the providence of *G O D*; and makes the prayer of a christian as to outward things, commensurate with his care and duty concerning them by equally restricting both within the verge of the present day."

I take this to be quite new argument; but what is it which invention will not try at a hard pinch; yet here I think it fails. For I apprehend the *bread* here prayed for is spiritual: *Story's Journal* p. 403. so interprets it; are we then forbid to provide bags that will not wax old, or to lay up for our selves a good foundation against the time to come? Our SAVIOUR (*John* vi. 27.) *forbids* expressly, *to labour for the meat which perisheth*; which may furnish the *Enq.* with as full

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reason

reason in his own way, (but in contradiction to himself) for refusing to work at all, as *to take no thought for the morrow*: But the use I now make of it is to shew, how improbable it is, that our LORD, who forbids to labour for the meat that perisheth, should in a religious petition designed for the use of his followers, command them to pray for outward bread, and take no notice of that which is spiritual, of which we have daily need. If we admit that both spiritual and temporal bread are intended in the petition, yet if the *former* excludes not a provision for futurity in things spiritual, neither can the latter exclude a temporal provision for futurity, in a way *proportioned* to temporal concerns. If the words deliver us from evil, may be interpreted, from sin and perdition hereafter, why not, from the evils of bodily pain, poverty and distress, &c. also?

And could the *Enq.* by evident proofs, *restrict* the words of the petition to *outward* bread alone, this will not prove his point, or shew it to be wrong to address the ALMIGHTY, for future temporal blessings, both for ourselves and others. Many such petitions it is probable, both he and I have heard publickly made to heaven, by such persons, whose qualifications he will hardly dispute. I account King *George* a great temporal blessing to the nation in general, and to us as a people in particular: And believe some of our addressees to him, have imported an earnest desire or prayer, that GOD might long continue his reign over us, wherein is implied the enjoyment of every temporal privilege and blessing under his government.

But the *Enq.* by this argument puts me in mind of some of our modern *Electionists*, who most weakly endeavour to establish their own doctrine; because our LORD in a certain prayer on behalf of his disciples, says, *I pray not for the world*. Hence they simply infer, the world are not interested in CHRIST's prayers, only because they are left out in this *special petition*; tho' it is very plain from other places, that he came not to condemn but save the world, and hath by his apostle commanded

commanded us to pray for all men, which is the very same as doing it himself. Even his wicked persecutors and crucifiers, he besought God to forgive. I suppose these wretches were of the world, and am sure this petition of CHRIST's, is fully adequate to his praying for the whole world. If then we understand the words; give us this day *our daily bread*, to relate to outward bread, and the present day only, will it follow, that no christian may at any time in prayer consistently ask temporal blessings for the morrow, or future time? As the *Eng.* even dotes on the literal sense of some scriptures, to the subversion of morality and good sense; it may be affirmed, that if this part of the petition excludes all care of the morrow, so does the whole prayer all care about things (how necessary soever,) not expressly mentioned in this prayer, which yet are often humbly prayed for. And the *Eng.* might as well exclude from all prayer, every blessing spiritual or temporal, not particularized in this prayer, as by this meer novel conceit, to exclude a due care and thought for the morrow. If many things, of a spiritual nature are allowed to be implied, though not expressed in this prayer, by the same rule many things temporal, and amongst the rest a due care for the morrow may be implied also?

If spiritual bread alone is intended in the petition, the *Enquirer's* superstructure falls to the ground: If it is *temporal*, his building will not stand. I shall produce one instance from scripture, out of perhaps many that the New Testament might furnish in behalf of taking some care and thought for the morrow: Though this instance at first sight may seem to make against me.

Go to now, ye that say to day or to morrow, we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy, and sell, and get gain; whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow; for what is your life? it is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, if the Lord will, we shall live and do this or that. James iv. 13, 14, 15.

As this is a very solid and elegant *reprehension* of all inordinate worldly care about things present or future, so it *manifestly allows* a just liberty of providing for the morrow. Christians ought to transact their outward affairs in GOD's fear, and with a view to his blessing ; and so considered there is no evil in purposing on some occasions to remove from one place or city to another, for traffick or gain, or to mend our condition ; or it had been wrong in the apostle to advise as he doth : Who condemns not such measures, but only the evil disposition of mind wherein too many engage in worldly affairs. It would surely be very impious in a christian to ask GOD's leave to do what he has absolutely forbid any man to do, as the literal sense of the precept supposeth. How would it sound if a christian should say ; *If the Lord will, I will swear, get drunk, or commit murder, &c.* and would it not be as great a contradiction to the literal sense of the precept, *take no thought for the morrow*, for any man to say, *I intend to remove to such a place for trade and gain, &c.* which the apostle doth not say is unlawful in itself, but that we ought to say *if the Lord will*.

The *Enquirer* insists on the duty of daily labour for our temporal bread ; he must therefore interpret the words, *labour not for the meat which perisheth*, to mean, *labour not principally, chiefly or too anxiously for the meat which perisheth* ; and by the same rule we may interpret the other, *Take no undue or inordinate thought for the morrow*.

The apostle *Paul* saith, *he that provides not for his own household hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel*. Now if a man cannot provide for his family, without taking some care and thought for the morrow, it must be allowed the *Eng.* makes the sense of the precept literally opposite to the duty of man ; and I am sure his doctrine is not only *irreconcilable* to scripture, but proves *many*, if not every good man of our society, and of every other christian society, a frequent if not continual violator of the precept ; (which is a charge such as I think christian prudence cannot admit) and this too, it makes them in a
just

just and necessary discharge of the duties owing to themselves and families; which duties, in a common way according to the disposition of worldly affairs by divine Providence, *cannot* in many important instances be performed, without taking care and thought for the morrow. Even marriage itself, said to be honourable in all, is a provision far beyond the morrow. So also in a palpable manner is the education of youth; the building houses firm and durable. The letting and taking upon lease, houses and lands for a term of years. The putting out youth apprentices to learn trades, whereby to get bread the after part of their lives. Thus the most Religious dispose of their offspring, whose masters, the best of them, have a reasonable eye to future gain, during the time of servitude. All these, and abundance more ways, are taking care and thought beyond the morrow. Even ploughing and sowing, and harvest, are denied by the *Enquirer's* doctrine, in contradiction to God's gracious and comfortable promise to Noah: *While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease.* Gen. viii. 22.

Hence I think the *Enq.* if he will be candid, must see, what mad work his doctrine if reduced to practice would make in the world. And suppose I here by way of reprisal, insist on the literal sense of that scripture, *labour not for the meat which perisheth*; and fix the *Enquirer's* own reflections on me, more justly upon himself.

I apprehend the *Enq.* doth not express a becoming reverence for the express words of CHRIST, and the providence of GOD when he saith p. 60. "that a total dependence on Providence, may be, and is very consistent with our activity and endeavours." How can that be a total dependence on Providence where *means* are used? Or how can our labour, activity and endeavours, be any other than a flat contradiction, such as christian prudence cannot admit, to the express words of our LORD, *labour not for the meat which perisheth*? Will he justify himself by any method of arguing in this case, which will not equally serve my turn in the other?

I may also invert his own method of reasoning against me, p. 60, 61. on himself. Taking due care and thought for the morrow, is so far from rendering man careless, or independant of Providence, that without this care in a common way, he could have no reasonable motive to activity. If a *Shopkeeper* or *Mechanick*, he can take in no more work, or lay in a greater Stock than for the present day. Is he an *Husbandman*, he cannot plough, because that is a preparation for sowing; nor sow, because that is in order for reaping. Is he a *single person* he cannot marry, because that makes great provision for futurity? Is he a *parent*, he cannot teach, or cause his children to be taught and instructed in the most useful things, because it is preparing them for the time to come. But he who understands CHRIST's doctrine truly, will consider, that as GOD has made him in some sort the feeder and preserver of his family, that unless his industry and care exceed his present wants, when sickness, infirmity, and old age comes, he may have nothing left, reputably, and comfortably to subsist himself and them; he labours therefore, both for the present and future time, and prays for a blessing on both. This labour and care, makes his dependance on GOD, more rational, than it could be without them. While his hand is exercised in the *former*, his heart is fixed on the *latter*, and the experience of the past providence of GOD, encourages him to hope for a blessing in time to come; this whets his industry, and increases his dependance for a present and future supply; though he doth not regard the morrow as his own, nor is unduly solicitous about it, yet *provides* prudently for it, because it may come, and that its success may be as insufficient for its demands, as to days diligence may exceed. Such a care for the morrow, is no more a breach of the precept of *taking no thought for it*, than our daily labour, is a breach of the words, *labour not for the meat which perisheth*, or infers any more distrust of the Providence of GOD. Doth not every thinking person, greatly blame him, who acquiring much, spends or gives away all; leaving a widow wretched, and orphans poor, to lament his neglect, or excessive bounty, in *taking no care and thought for the morrow?*

The *Enquirer's* intention was I hope good, and I acknowledge his friendship, in endeavouring to convince me of my error, yet it cannot bespeak a due reverence for CHRIST's precepts, so to interpret them, as to make one precept contradict another, and *clash* with fundamental moral duties, and with the practice of the best men now alive in the world; all which the *Eng.* hath done.

Such as want satisfaction in the case of the Land-tax, may be glad to meet with it, p. 56, 57. of the *Enquiry*, the author of which, has done something towards clearing that point; and it would be well if he had removed all objection, and made it as clear as he himself seems to think. But this must be granted, our practice herein can at *worst* be only an error, not affecting the main doctrine we plead for. And if our practice herein is allowed to border on a difficulty, yet, *I dare not* now call it insuperable or contradictory. I would chuse to consider our compliance in this point, as a full confutation of the charge of obstinacy urged against us, and an unanswerable argument (as are also some special transactions abroad) of our readiness to oblige and obey the powers set over us; and yet methinks something plausible may be said in our defence, which if it strengthens or illustrates what the *Eng.* hath offered on this head, I shall be well pleased; however it will not I hope in the least weaken a good cause.

Subjects of most princes, must know that some of the money levied by taxes, is sometimes indifferently employed. In former reigns, the Quakers money paid to the government, may have been *badly expended*; would he therefore have been justifiable in refusing the payment of all taxes? Where would such a scruple end, or to what a pitch of singularity and unhappiness would not a conduct in all other respects equally scrupulous bring such a man? Suppose no preamble, or preface to acts of parliament, set forth the purposes for which money is raised on the subject. The Quaker must know, that much of the money raised in time of war, is applied to military uses. It may be supposed, that in former reigns, much
treasure

treasure was lavished to procure criminal pleasures, or promote Popery; and what difference is there as to scruple, between our knowing the application of publick money, by a preamble to an act of parliament, or by the obvious exigence of the state, or the œconomy of the supreme rulers of it? Can the preamble setting forth the intention of the Land-tax act, be a greater bar to our conformity in *that case*, than the visible state of a nation or notoriety of facts in the *other*? If it cannot, it may seem to follow *we are equally obliged* to pay our taxes to the government, whether the laws that require them, are, or are not prefaced with the reasons why such taxes are laid on the subject. The preamble to the Land-tax act, can hardly afford so much scruple against our paying it now, as Popery and some of the vices of former reigns might to a tender conscience against paying taxes then; because those vices and superstitions, were far worse than defensive war can be. Wherefore if at that time it was every subject's duty to pay his taxes, it must be ours now. To suppose it was not their duty then, because of the known misapplication of publick money, would contradict the example of our Saviour, who wrought a miracle to pay a tax (without ever that we read taking cognizance of the application of it) *giving thereby saith a great Casuist, a standing example in his own person, to all his followers in THAT, and all succeeding generations.* I have considered this point here, though it may be thought to belong to that part of my book which professedly defends our principle: But I judge it not absolutely essential to the argument. And yet I think it a very difficult point to settle thoroughly, though the *Enq.* seems to make no difficulty at all of it. *Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, is, he says, a positive precept, that has no exception annexed:* Those the very following words are, *and unto GOD the things that are GOD's.* Now where Cæsar requires what is GOD's due, or makes laws which cannot be obeyed without disobeying GOD, every such case is an exception to Cæsar's authority; which if true, I think he hath by no means answered what he calls my pretended simile, because the payment of tythes and militia money &c. is enjoined by Cæsar's authority. It is true, that Cæsar no more than a
subject

subject ought to be defrauded of his due : And to talk of any exception to such an obvious rule of justice would be very trifling as well as unjust. Wherefore the *Enq.* meaning should be, that in the matter of imposts, or laws to raise money, there is no exception to Cæsar's authority. I forbear urging this point any further at present.

The *Enq.* p. 36, endeavour's to support R---B---'s opinion of that scripture, relating to John the baptist, and the soldiers who came to him for instruction; but nothing I have yet seen convinceth me, that his exhortation to them, amounts to a prohibition of defensive war : Yet the *Enq.* will have it, that the words, *do violence to no Man*, forbids all war, it being hard to perceive how war should subsist without violence.

" The only way *says the Enq.* p. 36. of confuting " the apologist were to solve that difficulty, which yet " this author does not so much as attempt." This is a plain misrepresentation, because I did attempt to shew what might be intended by the word violence, consistent with defensive war, and the *Enq.* endeavoured to confute me, tho' he indeed calls what I advanced, *starting a variety of senses of the word*; which was nevertheless an attempt how weak soever to solve that difficulty. I have searched the old and new testament for the meaning of this word *violence*; and find it in external cases between Man and Man, to be every where used, in what I call a bad, or *offensive* sense : And it seems improbable the baptist should use it in any other or new sense, different to that wherein the writers of the Bible, seem to have constantly done.

" Might not this violence, *says the Self-Defence*, p. 19. " be understood 1st. of offensive war." *I think it may not* *says the Enq.* *because I apprehend, that is a distinction which* *soldiers are not admitted to make.*

Reply. By their commanders they may not, but in some cases, especially of injustice and cruelty; murder and butchery, the law of God and dictates of conscience, may not only allow, but *oblige* to such a distinction.

I

Besides,

Besides, some who had a supreme command, and a greater power than common soldiers, might be present upon this occasion. And the prohibition being general as the *Enq.* allows, extends to Generals who command armies, to Kings and Princes who command Generals; who have therefore some right to make such a distinction.

“ Or 2dly *said the Self-Defence*, when an enemy is by the fortune of war, entirely in our power, to save, or destroy, soldiers should then be humane and sparing of mens lives.” But *says the Enq.* I conceive this sense will not hold, because the bounds of it are exceeding narrow, and bear no just proportion, to the extent of so general a prohibition.

Reply. I do not bound the extent of the prohibition to this sense alone, tho’ he must know that this belongs to it; yet there are several senses exclusive of defensive war, wherein it may be occasionally understood; whose united bounds, are not narrow, but bear a great proportion to the extent of such a general prohibition. But were there only this sense, it is worth a caution. What cruel devastations with fire and sword: How many thousands, yea millions of men, women, and children, have been destroyed after battles have been won, because soldiers have not been humane and sparing of mens lives? “ Or 3, *said the Self-Defence*, it may be understood of those private pillages, plunders and ravages, which common soldiers are too liable to be found in.” This sense the *Enq.* says he can admit; because it hinders not, but that it may also be understood of public plunders, pillages, and ravages, &c.

Reply. In *offensive* war it may be so understood, and in the abuses of that, which is *defensive*: But the true end of defensive war, is, to protect property against plunderers and pillagers; a thing, quite distinct from plundering, and pillaging, and offensive wars, from the abuses of that which is defensive, and from the private robberies and abuses common soldiers have been found in. In the first, *offensive* war, justice and honesty are violated: In the second, *defensive* war, soldiers may overcome without being cruel or abusive, and by protecting property do what they are hired for,

for. In the last place, they may pillage and abuse, (and too often do) the persons they are hired to defend.

But tho' *do violence to no man* may be occasionally understood in a variety of senses, yet the *last* of the *three*, might be the baptists principal meaning at that time, in relation to the persons to whom he was speaking, as may be inferred from the words following,----*and be content with your Wages*. For were soldiers frugal and content with their pay, they would hardly run into the forenamed excesses, which they betake themselves to, as a support for their extravagancies. It doth not seem therefore to me, as the *Enq.* says, that the words *be content with your wages*; "may be a distinct caution not to be mutinous, or troublesome about their pay, and may have no relation either to the lawfulness or unlawfulness of their work."

This interpretation is sufficiently arbitrary; and we may be certain, *they do not* imply the unlawfulness of their work, but point out strongly, its lawfulness at that time. If *do violence to no man*, prohibits all wars, we may without offering violence to the text read it thus. *Lay down your arms, fight no more, and be content with your pay for fighting*. Was there ever such confusion in the doctrine of a man inspired by heaven? (*refuse to work but take your wages*) or such an instance amongst us since we have been a people? When some who were in the army embraced our doctrine, and scrupled the use of arms, they were not less scrupulous in relation to their pay: And if the words in the text import a prohibition of war, *instead of subjoining, and be content with your wages*, it should have been, *refuse your wages*; this would be good sense and honest, but the other is *neither*.

The *intermediate* words; *accuse no man falsely*, being connected with the other, *do violence to no man*, did we need them as auxiliaries, would strengthen our argument; a false accusation, and offering violence are near of kin; *strongly denoting*, something said or done offensively.

The word *violence*, I take in the most usual, if not *constant* scriptural acceptation of it, to intend the commencement of blows, or hostilities, publick or private, without any real cause of offence first given. Thus we read Gen. vi. 2. *that the earth was filled with violence*, to the great displeasure of the Almighty : Which must be taken in a bad or offensive sense, and has *no relation* that I can see, to such force as may be used to repel violence ; as when Abraham armed 318 servants of his own, pursued after and vanquished the four kings, and released his brother Lot. Here was force used, but in a good sense ; God did not blame, but prosper Abraham in this undertaking. See also *J. Pennington*, whom I may mention to the *Enq.* &c. “ --- I speak not this, against magistrates “ or peoples defending themselves, against foreign inva- “ sions, or making use of the sword to *suppress* the *vi-* “ *lent* and evil-doers, &c.” The same or a like distinction is obvious here also. The word *violent* being used to denote the outrageous behaviour of such as infest the peace of society ; and the word *suppress*, to denote the force which government is obliged to use for quieting such disturbances, and punishing the disturbers of the publick peace.

To take the Baptist's words as the *Enq.* doth, would be an intire prohibition of all kinds of force or punishments. It says expressly, *do violence to no man* ; a phrase in its literal sense indefinite and universal ; yet in *this sense*, violence is done to the thief or murderer, when he is overpower'd and imprison'd, and more so, when he is pinioned, carted and hang'd. We must therefore here understand the word *violence*, in an offensive sense, or become advocates for thieves and murderers, against the justice of government in punishing them.

I take leave in this place to shew the *Enquirer* what defence there is in a sword without using it offensively, though I take the words to be just as good sense as to say, I might find some difficulty in demonstrating *what offence there is in a sword, without using it defensively* : But I answer according to his meaning. If one man draws his sword upon another

another (who is peaceable) and makes *passes* with a vehement declared resolution to wound or kill, and the latter by his natural power, and by his skill parries off the aggressor's sword, and even wound or kill him; this is to use the sword defensively for his own preservation. And when a forward man, picks a quarrel with and beats his neighbour, a stick or other weapons may be used defensively. So likewise, when one nation invades another; the invaded to repel the invaders, may use swords and weapons defensively. These weapons were used defensively at *all* times, as were the halberd and axe afterwards. *Offensive*, and *defensive*, are terms of opposite and apparent signification.

The Baptist, though he preached CARIST his master, whose forerunner he was; yet seems to have left the matter of war like many others *just as he found it*; though he then expressly encouraged defensive war, it would have been no more argument for every man's fighting under the gospel, than his Water-baptism is an authority for that practice now; which I take, and perhaps could shew, to be no good authority; wherefore what is here replied in the *Enq.* only removes a rotten pillar, without weakening the foundation of our peaceable christian doctrine.

It is fit, I should in this place acknowledge that I had not with design, in one point; Self-Defence p. 34 misrepresented R. BARCLAY; and the *Enq.* 54, 55, is not right. This I freely acknowledge; and a writer who will not do thus when he sees his mistakes, deserves not to be read or reasoned with. But I see not the same reason to confess my fault and obligation to the *Enq.* in another case respecting the same great Man. I had Self-Defence p. 37, observed as follows.

Some may think I ought to have made a formal answer to every thing urged by R. B. on this head, under the proposition of salutations and recreations; but I have declined that, and taken another method for one reason among others, out of a sincere respect to the memory of that great and good man, the most infirm part of whose
 “ excellent

“ excellent writings, I was loath to set to publick view. To this, p. 58, the *Enq.* gives the following answer.

“ This paragraph imports, that he has no mean opinion of his own abilities, but would insinuate to his readers, as if he had declined a conquest he could have made over *R. B.* on this subject: This looks like proclaiming a triumph before the victory. For some who have read both of them are of opinion that what he calls the most infirm part of *R. B.* writings is attended with a force of reasoning far superior to the strongest part of his; and that his concealed reasons for declining to answer that writer, may probably be of more force, than that which he has revealed.”

I have cited both *mine* and *his* verbatim, that the reader may judge, (to whom I appeal) if my *then* disapprobation of *R. B.*---’s writings on the subject of war, could have been easily expressed in more soft and handsome terms. Wherefore the *Enq.* grows here without cause rather too warm, and not quite civil, using *expressions* hardly becoming the best of writers, such as amount to an insinuation if not charge of vanity and insincerity; reflections I should be sorry to merit. Nor does he here, well as elsewhere, treat the *Self-defence* so handsomely that book hath done the people called Quakers, and particular, *J. Besse*, the writer of the defence of Quakerism. Nor is what he alledges strictly true, ’tis *one thing* not to enter *formally* into argument with a writer, and *another*, to desert the argument, which it was obvious the *Self-defence* was far from doing, as it not only encountered (in substance) most things material in *R. B.* but advanced such arguments for defensive war, as are no more confuted by *R. B.* than by the *Enquirer*. However p. 64 saith, *the intent of his book is not to minister the least occasion of offence, either to me, or any man.* which tho’ a civil and I hope sincere profession, is so far inconsistent with the above, and other unmerited reflections of his pen, may abundantly warrant my answering in his own words p. 4. viz. *If that be true, ’tis a reflection on his prudence*

used the most probable means of obtaining an end, he does
aim at.

I shall obviate another perversion, and then draw my
present manner of remarking on the *Enquiry*, to a conclu-
sion. The Self-defence p. 9, had observed as follows.
Our Saviour in the very next chapter requires with
the same strictness certain things at our hands, which
even these gentlemen interpret with the same proper
limitations as do the rest of mankind; viz. that we
should take no care and thought for the morrow; for
our lives, or for what we shall eat and drink; that
God, who cloaths the lilies and feeds the sparrows,
will abundantly provide for his children, who are much
better than many sparrows. This is positively spoken,
and if literally taken, excludes all human care and in-
dustry, requiring that we should be as totally depend-
ant on the providence of God, as are the sparrows,
nay, as are even the inanimate lilies themselves.

This the *Eng.* p. 26. calls, “ the representing the crea-
tures of least understanding as most dependant on the
providence of God,” and harrangues smartly against
(yet makes the like mistake as where he charges me
with preferring the power of Man to the assistance of God,)
that he should first have consider’d, that dependance, or
being dependant, on God, is *two fold*. The lilies, and
inanimate things, as they owe their being *to*, so doth
their growth, beauty, and continuance in being, depend
on the providence of God. Man hath also in common,
with all created things, this sort of dependance on the
will and pleasure of the CREATOR: But there is a *much*
greater dependance of intelligent and living souls; a believ-
ing in God who made them; fearing, loving, serving,
and relying on him for preservation. And as the brutal
and inanimate parts of the creation, are destitute of this
sort of dependance; a little reflection and candour might
show any Man I could never intend (nor do my words
support it) to set them *in this respect*, on a level with, or
superior to Man: But by being *as totally dependant as the*
inanimate, was intended that as they do nothing for themselves,

so our LORD's words, literally taken as applicable to man, would make him *as inactive* as them; doing no more towards his own growth and preservation in the world, than the right application of his powers, than things inanimate (that have not such powers) all whose beauty, strength and continuance, are as to themselves (being void of thought and activity) merely mechanical, or at least involuntary, but not so is Man: And the literal sense of our SAVIOUR's words in this place, as in that of not labouring for the meat which perisheth, make as strongly against the industry of to day, as they forbid taking thought for the morrow, and pluck up by the root all the fine things which this author hath advanced p. 60, 61, about labouring and praying for our daily bread.

That I might not go too far, or give offence, or injure the cause I have now embraced, I have passed by some things open to argument, and not stretched others to the utmost extent; and for the same reasons I have not disturbed him, by entering against him into the most *nice* and *tender* part of the argument, how much room soever might think was given me to have pressed very hard there. Ingratitude and ill manners are ever to be shunned and detested; yet we should not dissemble, and complement away our own understanding to the kindest endeavours to convince; and I hope that neither the *Enquirer*, or any candid Man, or body of Men, will censure this liberty as unfriendly or ungenerous in me, who has held (and do hold) the society in great honour; the abilities and writings of this Author in great esteem; having perused some of the *latter* with much delight and approbation. But I believe this subject, by far the most difficult of any he had ever undertaken, and possibly he did not bestow on it so much deep religious reflection as was necessary; for can it be supposed the inconsiderableness of the person he condescended to oppose, can be any excuse for the superficial or sophistical treatment of so intricate and important a subject: However a part of his preface, may suit me on this occasion. viz. "My thoughts, differ
" no more from that authors, than his thoughts do from
" mine

“ mine; wherefore that mutual difference can give no
 “ just cause of offence to either of us.”

I have animadverted on the foregoing things for (at least) two reasons; first, that tho’ I hope I am ingenuous in renouncing my former error, yet that can be no reason for remaining silent under such mistakes and perversions. 2dly. Representing a doctrine so divine and spiritual, or of such extream nicety, as if it were easily to be accounted for by plain argument to the understandings of Men, is leading human expectation much *higher* than we may be able to satisfy. I now proceed to consider my former book, beginning with the scripture it first mentions; that is the prophecy of *Micah*. chap. iv. 3.

And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off, and they shall beat their swords into plow shares, and their spears into pruning hooks: Nation shall not lift up a sword against Nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

To the same import, speaks the prophet *Isaiah* chap. ii. 4. As these prophecies lay hard at the root or bottom of this controversy, to evade their force, the Self-Defence p. 4. reasoneth as follows.

“ It must I think be granted, that among those who
 “ hold Self-Defence to be consistent with christianity,
 “ there are many persons of meek and peaceable spirits,
 “ who are without forsaking the doctrine of Self-Defence,
 “ in the very state which the prophecy hath respect to;
 “ who would not on any account injure their neighbour,
 “ or draw the sword offensively; and were but every Man
 “ brought into this condition of mind, the time prophesied
 “ of, would without embracing this principle of the Qua-
 “ kers be certainly come: And I suppose when this hap-
 “ py and desirable time arrives, the Gentlemen of the law,
 “ will be almost, if not altogether as useless as carnal
 “ weapons, but, will that be a good reason for laying
 “ the law, in this evil and corrupt state of things, entirely
 “ aside.”

K.

Suppose

Suppose to make *short* (if it were but as *sure*) work, I should answer, in the words of the *Enq.* p. 14. "In this he plainly admits the prophecy to exclude offensive war, which is all we ask : Because if the time be come, when no one nation, shall lift up the sword against another *offensively*, the occasion of drawing it *defensively* will be taken away ; and the cause being removed, the effect must cease."

This answer, what sanction soever *his* pen gave it, would have been thought a very poor one from me ; because it is in fact, giving up the cause to our opposers, who contend not for drawing the sword *offensively*, and will agree with him, *without forsaking* the doctrine of Self-Defence, that when it is not drawn *offensively*, the occasion for drawing it *defensively* will be taken away. But this is foreign to the argument ; *that time is not come* ; the sword by too many is drawn *offensively* ; the question therefore is, what is now to be done, in order for the accomplishment of these prophecies ? I am persuaded they have respect to a principle, and a people, which in war cannot so much as *defend* ; and I think *we are* the very people who *ask* this, which is a vast deal more than the *Enq.* says we ask, by whom the argument is evaded, and our doctrine misrepresented : But I shall endeavour by answering more fully, to set it in a better light ; for unless this part of the controversy be well spoken to, all we have else to advance may be of little service : But this part of the work well done, will be a good foundation for the whole building.

My former book makes a false assertion, when it says that some who maintain defensive war, are already in the state predicted ; for such persons as they practice, must or do learn, or allow the art of war to be learned : Whereas, of such as are really in that state, the prophecy saith expressly, *they shall learn war no more* ; a flat contradiction to my former assertion.

I see no possibility of putting a figurative construction upon these prophecies ; as they relate simply to a fact that

that will certainly come to pass ; incapable of any other meaning than is expressed : *They shall learn war no more.* He therefore who wars, or learneth war, or approveth war on any occasion in his own person, tho' he never practice it, and is ever so peaceable in abstaining from offensive war, or commendable in other respects, hath not yet attained to the state which the prophesy hath respect to. I shall therefore, 'till fairly disproved by argument, instead of assertions, take the words in their plain sense, and endeavour to reason accordingly.

That these prophecies shall be fulfilled, will be granted on both sides ; no man believing christianity, can deny it. I believe we shall also agree, that this state of peace will not be effected at once. On our principle, we believe it will not ; nor on theirs can it be imagined, that the whole world will disclaim and disuse the practice of war, in one hour, or one day, the accomplishment must therefore be admitted on both sides to be by degrees. But this is very inconsistent, so long as danger, or a probability, or possibility of danger remaineth, near or afar off, with that great care and precaution, *inseparable* to the self-defending principle, upon which I see not how war is to be laid aside, either all at once, or by degrees : The *former* is so irrational, that perhaps none will plead for it, and let any man shew, if he be able, how it can be laid aside by degrees, unless while danger remaineth ? which imports that trust in providence (instead of arms) ; *which is our principle* ; upon which the prophecies by degrees naturally may be, and in part have been fulfilled, in the breaking forth of the gospel, and by us as a people long since. But further,

That mankind should be all at once, converted to a state of peace, seems an extravagant supposition ; contrary to the nature of free agents, and God's general method of dealing with mankind : For tho' the wickedness of such agents may sometimes be over-ruled for good ends ; yet man *is not*, and I think *can not*, be made truly good, without his own free concurrence : And we may be assured, that when this state of peace universally obtains in

the world, it will be to the glory of human nature, as well as to God's glory ; and of course by such persuasive motives, as are adapted to *work gradually* upon mankind ; though the work may sometimes advance swifter than at others.

That this work should first commence in individuals, and from them spread by degrees, is not only reasonable in itself, but consonant with God's dealing in other cases with mankind : It *was*, and *is* so, in the reformation from Popery. Even Christianity spread by degrees, and hath not yet by far overspread the world. And if single persons, as in the case of the apostles, are gradually enlightened, and brought to the knowledge of truth ; much more, will whole nations, and empires, be brought gradually to the perfect gospel state of peace. And as it will be the power and providence of God, which shall hereafter establish, and maintain universal peace ; why is not the same power and providence, admitted to protect the first few, who shall be made instrumental to begin this work ; as they are doing no more, than what all in time will do ? Can he, who admits this power and providence in the *general*, reasonably deny it in the *particulars*. It is very evident, that the great designs of God and Man are often effected by degrees, and sometimes slowly ; I conclude it is and will be so, in the establishment of universal love and peace, and that in concurrence with divine light and grace within, the first few who put in practice this doctrine, shall be made eminently serviceable in God's hand towards the establishment of this perfect gospel state.

But this is not all ; for the context of the same chapter, favours this reasoning, intimating that our doctrine shall begin first in some, and consequently spread gradually ; For the prophet, Micah v. 8. adds, *And thou O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion, the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem.*

I understand this not so much of the Zion and Jerusalem outwardly, as I do in a spiritual or evangelical sense ;
tho'

tho' it was so far true outwardly, in that our Saviour appeared and preached his doctrine in the land of *Canaan*, and chose his Apostles and disciples *only*, or at least *chiefly* from among the *Jews*: In this sense therefore it *first came to Zion*. But there is an higher sense, and the apostles, being Jews of the outward *Zion* and *Jerusalem*, were also translated into the spiritual *Zion*, mountain or city of God. *Ye are* (saith the apostle to the *Hebrews*, Chap. xii. 22.) *come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living GOD, the heavenly Jerusalem, &c.* Here he uses the words, *Zion*, *City*, and *Jerusalem*, in a spiritual gospel sense.

Our blessed LORD, is stiled the Prince of *Peace*; his kingdom is set up in the hearts of all who truly receive, and obey him; who says, *the kingdom of GOD is within you*. Luke xvii. 21. And the apostle, Rom. xiv. 17. says, *it stands in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost*. A state of true peace is therefore in scripture sense, a kingdom or dominion, which in its evangelical perfection was first to come unto *Zion*, teaching her to cease from war, and by her meek and engaging example she (in concurrence with such other means, whereby it may please GOD to judge and alarm mankind) shall rebuke violence, and teach by degrees, strong nations from afar, the same lesson of peace, clearly predicted in v. 3.

The prophet *Isaiah* chap. ii. predicts the same state of peace, nearly in the same words as *Micah*, and saith, *that out of Sion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem*.--- *Oh! house of Jacob, come ye and let us walk in the light of the Lord*. Whereby alone, they were enabled to understand the (spiritual) law of the Lord, and diffuse the doctrines thereof; particularly that of peace, and laying aside war, so explicitly held forth by these two prophets.

Great indeed was formerly, generally speaking, and yet remains to be the *carnality* of the Jews, in confining these and many other prophetic writings, to themselves, and the land of *Canaan* outwardly, when many of the prophe-

prophecies, had relation to gospel truths and times: And by these two prophets, is set forth the gospel *Zion*, city or people of GOD; whom in some sort, as he did *Israel* of old, he hath made a kind of first fruits unto himself, leading them in the paths of *Messiah* Prince of Peace.

The cessation of war, predicted to come universally to pass, which was first to come to *Zion*, is by all professors of christianity, allowed to be yet unaccomplished; and the jewish priesthood and dispensation being passed away, is it not pretty evident, from the nature of the things, as well as from the Apostle's words above quoted, that the *Sion* and *Jerusalem* here mentioned are spiritual, and appertain to the gospel? This principle of peace, shall therefore, we trust in GOD's time, *spread over all*, to the intire extinction of discord and war. In the mean time, such a prudent and good use of the laws of the land, as hath a tendency to reform offenders, and fit them for this world and the next, is much preferable to blood shed &c. of the best of wars.

The four precepts of our Saviour, *Matt. v.* may seem to come next in order before us, and the labour'd manner wherein the Self-defence hath endeavour'd to explicate them in behalf of war, may be esteemed by some, as the *main strength* of that performance; but I do not think so, being persuaded that these precepts are not in every respect to be literally understood; and so far my *former* and *present* self can agree: For which reason I need only confine myself to the consideration of the first, *resist not evil*: However the Self-defence from *p. 5* to *11*, takes pains from the other three precepts to shew, that this, *resist not evil*, as well as the others, is to be understood with due limitations; which I hope hath appeared in my remarks on the *Enquiry*, but, it doth not hence follow that defensive war, is by all christians to be numbered with such exceptions or limitations as are *necessarily* to be admitted in this precept; *this I think is the very point in dispute*. And how hard soever, it may be, to reconcile our doctrine against war, with magistracy, yet to some christians this precept may import a prohibition of war. But as I allow the precept to

have many limitations or exceptions of a private kind, and one that is public and extensive, viz. magistracy, an objector may readily say *and why not defensive war* also? to which I answer for the present, (for I shall be more full by and by) to some it may for the time being be a very just exception; but to others *not so*, because I think some must be called to begin the great work of peace in the world, and because civil power is more eligible than war; such a form of government especially, as might arise from the dictates of divine wisdom, *for he that ruleth over men, should be just, ruling in the fear*, and consequently in the wisdom of God. And also because no wicked and unjust wars were to be undertaken before this precept was given, and our LORD carries his doctrine of forbearance beyond that of the *Mosaic* law; though I do not arbitrarily press our sense upon all men, believing some sincere conscientious persons may see it in a different light. But yet I hope it will appear, to such as are *able* and *willing*, to enter dispassionately and *deeply* into this weighty subject; that in the present state of things, 'till they come much nearer their intended perfection, the outward sword (as well as, and in defence of magistracy) may be very expedient, and the disuse of it in others, in order to *set on foot*, and bring forward that most perfect State of peace so clearly pre-*dicted*, is altogether as rational; and that this seemingly strange and so much despised doctrine of ours, is no less than an essential part of a plan, framed by the Almighty, void of all contradiction, and attended with no difficulties but what his wisdom and power in carrying on and completing, can fully provide for, upon the principles here laid, (*and to be*) laid down. But,

Our present business is to shew, that the meaning of this precept, must correspond with the prophecies, which are a good standard to adjust the sense of the precept, so far as to prohibit all wars, to the most perfect followers of CHRIST, the gospel *Jerusalem* or *Zion*, to whom this kingdom of peace was first to come. It is very evident that our LORD carries the doctrine of self-denial and forbearance, *beyond* the *mosaic*, or former dispensations; the prophecies also pointing to a much higher condition.

It

It is therefore natural to conclude, he propagated the *ve* state predicted by the prophets, *they shall learn war no more* for he was the power and wisdom of **G O D**, revealed the fulness of time, and anointed for the fulfilling of the prophecies; *first* in his own peculiar people, and in *d* season throughout the earth. It is a strong conclusion that the precepts, or doctrines of **CHRIST**, could teach nothing less under the gospel, than what the prophets *for* told concerning that dispensation. These say, that war *shou* be learned no more; and if not learned, not to be *pract* ed; but of course prohibited to *some*, for the time being and at length to all under the gospel dispensation; tho' do not interpret the precept to be of universal and unlimited extent: Domestick authority, and recurring to the law, some cases for protection and safety, prove this, beyond contradiction; but how far a christian may go in the use of *c* power, for his own protection, or in correcting and straining vice in private, are matters that for ought I *c* see, must be left in some measure to his own freedom of judgment under a better than human direction. *C* power, and military havock, are obviously distinguishable yet he who can direct clearly how far a christian may *c* ry the former; that can nicely distinguish and fix the *bo* dary between civil and military power, and shew *w* force may be used in prosecution and aid of the form without breach of our peaceable doctrine, and also *d* own a rule for private oeconomy; will do what has *n* yet been done, and what I believe no human wisdom *c* do: Because I think no general rule can provide for *s* an infinite variety of cases, as must in a series of time, the unavoidable result of human affairs and contingencies. Tho' an ingenious friend of mine, said, *the matter wa* tell, *just how far civil power might be carried, and no furth* But I know 'tis much easier on a cursory, or more than cursory view, to imagine hard things are easy, than to *d* own, to bring home honestly, and adjust clearly, such *f* iculties as press this, and other points. It seems plain *m* e, that neither, the precept nor context, or any other concurrent parts of scripture, give us any ample rule *t* he regulation of our conduct upon all occasions, for if *e* ry duty were clearly laid down in a written revelation, *sho*

should not so much need a supernatural internal expofitor? The full and true sense of the precept as it respects every man in the many occurrences of life, is I think so far from being obvious to the common understanding of any man, that he who would know on all occasions its real extent to himself, must be directed by a measure of that spirit, which by *Christ's* express promise and appointment, *John* xiv. 16, 17, 26, was after his departure, to be the rule of his disciples, to explain the meaning of his own words and doctrines to them; we have as much need of the same thing now, seeing they had common understanding as well as we, and some advantages for the right understanding of the precept which we have not; and this I think is solid argument to every christian, for the necessity of a spiritual illuminator. The words of J. PENNINGTON, Part ii. p. 228, upon reading scripture are worth every christian's notice, but I most particularly recommend them to such among ourselves who may think human understanding and the true knowledge of Scripture too near of kin.

“ He that reads the scriptures in a true measure of light, received from God, he reads them aright, and whenever he readeth, it is to his benefit: He that readeth out of that, readeth to his hurt, that being then up in him, which, misunderstands, misapplies, and grows conceited, wise and confident according to the flesh; and so he is thereby liable to, and in great danger of setting up his interpretations, instead of the meaning of God's spirit.” Many passages of the like import, might I believe be found in his excellent writings.

As prophecy, is of the greatest authority, every one who thinks reverently, of those recorded in the old Testament, will, or ought so to interpret the doctrines contained in the New, as entirely to harmonize, for there can be no difference. We have already endeavour'd to make the precept of CHRIST agree with the prophets; and are under the same obligation to interpret other scriptures of the New Testament yet to be examined in the course of our argument.

Pages 11, 12, 13, the Self-defence considers our Saviour's answer to *Pilate*, when examined by him, viz. *My kingdom is not of this world: If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews.* John xviii. 36. And endeavours hence to prove, "that tho' his kingdom was not of this world, yet believers being members, or subjects of a worldly kingdom, may reasonably fight in support of their rights and priviledges; and that in this case, by the word *would*, is to be understood *they reasonably might defend their own priviledges, &c.*"

I dispute not, as the *Enquirer* does, the right, or equity of the custom of fighting defensively, in many of the men of this world; because I think with J. PENNINGTON, that the sword at present in some, is *necessary* and honourable. But yet I apprehend, this text hath a different aspect upon CHRIST's most immediate followers, as the gospel Signifies to whom this kingdom of peace was first to come. Our Saviour says expressly: John xv. 19. speaking to his disciples. *I have chosen you out of the world,* And chap. xv. 16. *They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.* Now were the distinction we oppose, to be admitted; they might contrary to the express words of CHRIST, be affirmed to be of the world. It cannot therefore in *contradistinction* to their LORD, be reasonable to consider the disciples, members of a temporal as well as a spiritual kingdom, unless it can be well proved, that our LORD was no member of civil society; had no rights and priviledges as such. He that paid taxes as a subject, and for ought we know, was suitably conformable to government, may be allowed to have had a right to human priviledges; yet notwithstanding this, his servants could not fight for him; nor could they therefore fight for themselves, without calling in question, the sufficiency of that power to preserve them, which was in their LORD: Without supposing they belonged to this world more than he did; in contradiction to CHRIST's plain assertion: *They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*

After our LORD's Ascension, there is not that I have found by reading of the New Testament, in the doctrines and

and lives of the apostles and disciples, so much as a single sentence in direct favour of war as their duty upon any occasion; or that maintains the distinction between CHRIST and his followers, which the *Self-Defence* pleads for. Our LORD taught in his doctrine, agreeable to those prophecies which related to the gospel, and arose from the influence of his own spirit in the prophets, i. *Pet.* i. 2. And the apostles consistent with both, renouncing those battles of the warrior, wherein is confusion and noise, and garments rolled in blood; preached to christians an inward and spiritual warfare, such as the prophet said, *should be, with burning and fuel of fire.* Paul the great apostle of the Gentiles; writing, as I take it, to a church, who (at least chiefly) by his ministry, had been profelyted from among the Gentiles to christianity, and had among them some, who either censured him, or walked disorderly themselves; or it may be both; faith on this wise.

For I beseech you that I may not be bold when I am present, with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us, as if we walked according to the flesh: For tho' we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: For the weapons of our warfare, are not carnal, but mighty through GOD, to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations and every high thing, that exalteth it self against the knowledge of GOD, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. ii. *Cor.* x. 2, 3, 4, 5.

As little as so plain a scripture may need comment or illustration; yet we may briefly observe two things: First, that the apostle ver. 3. plainly allows, that warring after the flesh, would to himself and fellow disciples be walking after the flesh, which he therefore warmly disclaims. *Some of you think of us as though we walked according to the flesh,* here is the charge, and the answer is,---*we do not war after the flesh,* which makes good my position. In the second we are told positively, what weapons they did use, viz. such as were spiritual, and negatively, such as they disused which were outward or carnal. All which by way of argument, imports more than if he had only spoken concerning spiritual weapons, without putting so strong a negative upon, yea and disclaiming such as were carnal. And as no sober christian will tax an inspired apostle, either with contradicting

CHRIST or himself, it must be allowed, what is here so expressly laid down against war is *no contradiction* to his doctrine taught elsewhere concerning civil magistracy. Such as plead for war, from the New Testament, have not so much as one positive text for it; the most they can do, is to prove it by implication, or endeavour to deduce it as a consequence from the power of the civil magistrate, and the nature of magistracy, and herein the main strength of the book I am answering lies. And I confess the difficulty is not small.

To the like purpose as above, Eph. vi. 12. speaks the apostle, *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood*; as much as to say, our principle forbids it: CHRIST in his doctrine without, and by his spirit within, hath made war sinful to us. Our warfare is inward, *against principalities and powers; against the rulers of the darkness of this world; against spiritual wickedness in high places.* By this it appears that instead of fighting with men, they had hot war with the devil and his angels. To which, let me add what the *Enquirer* p. 58, observes.

“ I apprehend (says he) that the history of the three
 “ first centuries of christianity, would furnish a man with
 “ abundance more instances, against christians fighting
 “ than for it; even though we should admit that of the
 “ Thebean Legion, which yet others think to be fabulous. The story at large (says *Echard*, in his *Eccl.*
 “ *Hist.* vol. 2. p. 653.) is attended with so many great
 “ difficulties, as to history, chronology, and geography,
 “ and supported by such weak authorities, that several
 “ learned men, have not only doubted the particulars,
 “ but have pronounced the whole a fable.”

If this story were fact, and no fable, 'twill instead of being a plea for war, rather shew, that in this as well as in many other points, christians had *very early* degenerated. For I hold it a most unreasonable thing, to make *after time* and practice, the standard of scripture doctrine: On the contrary, I would rather try the fathers so called by the scripture. He that reads *Middleton's Free Enquiry*, &c. and

and takes notice of the errors and superstitions of the early ages of christianity, will have little reason, or encouragement to boast, of many primitive doctrines, as the standard of modern faith and practice.

I admire the Bible, as the best written rule of faith : And did not this very Bible, as well as the reason of the thing teach me, that the Holy Spirit, from whence it proceeded, *must be* a superior rule ; I should with the great *Chillingworth*, who was first a Protestant, then a Papist, and afterwards a Protestant again, be ready against tradition and antiquity, to cry out ! *The Bible, the Bible is the only religion of Protestants.*

The next scripture we shall examine, is, James iv. 1, 2. *From whence come wars and fightings among you ? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members ? ye lust and ye have not, ye kill and desire to have and cannot obtain. Ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.* As much as to say, that prayer in a true christian, is more effectual for the obtaining the blessings we want, than all the wars of the ungodly. Our argument will lose nothing, if we agree with the Self-defence, p. 19, “ that these expressions relate to offensive war, or to the worst sort of men, always uneasy and discontented with their own lot in life ; such being the temper described in the text, &c.” Because it doth not follow, that no other part of scripture prohibits defensive war. Different sins, or things forbidden, we find reprehended in different parts of scripture ; and perhaps no one place in the bible, expressly by name forbids all. But tho’ defensive war be not in the above words of the text prohibited ; yet something like a prohibition of this too, seems to be in part the design of this epistle ; which don’t seem to be a select one, to the christian church only ; for the first verse is directed to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad : some of whom stand severely reprov’d as very wicked persons ; *cruel, unjust, and extortioners* ; and even killing others to devour their substance. These the apostle bids *howl and weep, because of the miseries which were coming upon them.* These were they, that warred and killed, and desired to have ; and the

the apostle enumerating their grievous oppressions of the poor, saith also, *ye have condemned, and killed the just, and he doth not resist.* Here is our doctrine; and the apostle in this passage makes a sudden transition from the wicked among these scattered tribes, to some of a very different sort, who probably were sat down under CHRIST's spiritual teaching, and did not resist the wicked by fighting. These he advises to patience; enforcing his advice from the example of the prophets; some of whom under that dispensation, seem to have been brought into the evangelical state. *Take my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering and patience. Behold we count them happy that endure.* Chap. v. 11, 12. He also ver. 8. had bid them *be patient, and stablish their hearts for the coming of the Lord drew nigh.* As much as to say, "tho' they fight and war against you, resist them not with the same weapons, but be patient and trust in the LORD, for he draweth nigh to deliver you." Wherefore the prohibition of war, seems in this epistle to be twofold; relating both to offensive and defensive. The former is plain in the behaviour of the wicked; the latter is probable in the conduct of the just. As to the prophets referred to, probably *Isaiah* was of this number. *I gave (saith he) my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, I hid not my face from shame and spitting.* *Isai.* l. 6. And this, *because he trusted in God, and knew him, who (supported and) justified him to be near.* If it be objected that this relates to the sufferings of CHRIST; be it so, he is our example, but it might also be true of the prophet: Either these, or things similar, were endured by some of the prophets, or with what truth and propriety could the apostle refer to the prophets as examples of suffering and patience. This behaviour of the prophets under suffering may be taken as a lively preface and indication of that doctrine and practice of peace to be more generally countenanced and established under the gospel. And if believers are to take example by the patience and sufferings of some of the prophets, in a time when war was allowed, how much more should we regard and obey those prophecies, which say, *war shall be learned no more?*

Having

Having thus gone thro' the scripture part of the controversy, the most tender and difficult remains yet behind; but I shall before I come to this, answer an objection or two, and make a few observations, which will not I hope be quite useless and impertinent.

In former, and weaker dispensations, GOD sometimes delivered very miraculously, as dividing the Red Sea, &c. and in some cases by outward means in themselves too feeble to accomplish their work and end; as in the case of *Gideon*, &c. and all this, lest the enemies of GOD's people should have utterly destroyed them, or *Israel* boast himself saying, *mine own arm hath delivered me*. Now as the gospel is a more refined, spiritual, self-denying dispensation; it is natural to suppose that GOD therein should lead some of his children in a narrower path of trial, requiring and enabling them to cast their care upon him, in a way not a little opposite to human means, wisdom and prudence: But neither the seeming foolishness, nor real mysteriousness of a doctrine or practice, are good reasons for rejecting either.

The apostle *Paul* in his first epistle to the *Corinthians*, declares, that *the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God stronger than men. That God has chosen the foolish things of this world, to confound the wise; and weak things to confound things which are mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence. I take this to be emphatically true under the gospel; and we may hence see of how small account comparatively, is all human wisdom, strength, and accomplishments. Not that infinite wisdom and power can be either weak or foolish; yet the measures GOD sometimes takes, and the instruments he uses, appear very despicable to human wisdom; but under his direction and blessing, are made able to traverse, counterwork and disappoint the deepest schemes of worldly strength and policy. And I appeal to some of our adversaries who call themselves christians, if in their notion, any doctrine (admitting this of ours to be true) can be better calculated to answer this end under the gospel;*

pel; for I dare say they will allow it looks weak and foolish indeed.

Let us next hear the words of a late pious *French* prelate, as they stand in a book entitled, *Meditations, and Soliloquies*, &c. viz. ---- “ ’Tis thus O consuming Spirit, thou
“ art pleased to divest thy dear children, entirely of their
“ own wisdom and judgment, of all human policy and
“ rational means. Thou callest that which is not, to
“ confound that which is. Thou chusest that which is
“ most despised, and the meanest, to do that in the fight
“ of men, which is greatest and next to impossible
“ &c.”

This, if it doth not exceed, exactly corresponds with the apostle and our peaceable doctrine; though some who deem both enthusiastick, may cry out, *this is weak and foolish indeed*; tell us not of inspiration and providence, but give us plain rational argument. I answer, no doctrine or argument, is less rational, but much the stronger for having providence on its side. Take away inspiration and providence, and I own our doctrine drops to the ground; and so will christianity too, as it was, and is a memorable display of both inspiration and providence: And therefore such objections in the mouths of professed christians, are very irrational, besitting only Atheists or Deists to urge or bring.

Let it be well observed, that neither the sword in a way of self-defence, nor the providence of GOD, to such as have laid the sword aside, are in all times and cases made effectual for deliverance outwardly. The same providence which delivers in some cases, *is not* pleased to do so in all. Either deliverance from, or suffering under trials, are in his hand, capable of being made subservient to our good, and his glory: His not immediately or always delivering outwardly, such as confide in him on our principle, is no more argument against us, than against the use of means in others, which his blessing *does not* always make effectual for the end designed: And this I would have considered as a good answer to what I have heard

heard urged against our principle, viz. *The question is not whether providence can keep a foreign foe from invading us; but when he is come to our door, what is then to be done?* Fight to be sure, says the Objector. I answer, let such fight as are not able to see further, and let such as do see further, rely on Providence. This objection in the manner it stands, *answers itself*. The same Providence which can keep out a foreign enemy; can restrain him after he is entered. Providence could have hindered the *Egyptians* from following *Israel* to the *Red-Sea*; yet he permitted them to do it, and then delivered his people by the overthrow of their enemies. Providence could have hindered the *Babylonian* king from setting up his image, and preserved his people from being cast into the furnace; yet he permitted both, and delivered from the very flames into which they were cast: Though had they been consumed to ashes, 'twould have been no argument against the goodness of their cause, or the necessity of their reliance upon Providence. He, I believe, that is perfectly instructed in the scripture doctrine of our principle, will not only disuse the carnal sword, but find patience and suffering to be very often his lot and his duty in the private occurrences of human life.

I gladly embrace every scriptural aid upon this occasion: In scripture, the foundation of our argument is laid; and the remaining part of our argument will in some degree naturally be deducible therefrom, or consistent therewith. Scripture I think clearly points out the state we contend for, and some persons who in the primitive time were established therein. God's Spirit was their rule in this, as well as in other matters, and it must be ours if we are favoured with the same certain information. And as this doctrine must spread by degrees; nothing beneath God's wisdom, knows when and where to move, and whom to employ in it; and whom to make useful in other stations. The admission of a spiritual interpreter of scripture and guide in religious matters, is in this dispute an essential point with me: And scripture of great use herein by warranting this fundamental. I did some years since, in a printed dispute with some teachers of the established

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church, endeavour to shew the necessity, by reason and scripture for the abiding and continuance of this gift in the church of CHRIST for ever: I am still of the same mind, and tho' it cannot be expected I should here handle afresh this point at large; yet I will just step aside concisely to shew, a little of that great harmony there is between the old and new Testament in shewing unto us, that the law of the spirit of life in Man, is the true and perfect rule.

The law of the Lord said the Psalmist, is perfect converting the soul. The inward, not the outward law, which the Jews had by Moses: For the Apostle affirms, Heb. viii. 19. that this law made nothing perfect. Isaiah liv. 13. All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; Our Saviour, John vi. 45. applies this expressly to himself; which must be principally understood of his inward and spiritual appearance, because but a very small part of GOD's children had opportunity of being taught by CHRIST in his outward appearance; and because he himself as we shall soon see, prefer'd the dispensation of the Spirit above his outward manifestation in the flesh. But saith the above text, It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. It is prophets, in the plural number, and has relation also to Jeremiah, who is very explicit. Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah---- I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts---- they shall all know me from the least of them even unto the greatest of them. Jer. xxxi. 31, 33, 34. This, the Apostle, Heb. viii. 10, 11, most expressly and nearly in the very words applies to the gospel dispensation. Our LORD preached the same thing to his followers, preferring it to his personal residence among them. I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth--- for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.--- But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. John xiv. 16, 17, 26. And again, Chap. xvi. 7. It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you.

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Conformable to which is the Apostle, Rom. viii. 9. *If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his; and verse 14. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.* And as our LORD held forth this doctrine to his followers, referring them to the future inward manifestation of the Spirit, as a dispensation wherein they should be more amply instructed and qualified for their work, than during his abode and personal converse with them, they were made experimental witnesses of the truth of his doctrine, and very hearty assertors of it for the benefit of others; not daring or desiring to aim at a monopoly as is plain from 1 John ii. 27. *But ye (the true believers in common) have received the anointing &c.* It is plain, that our LORD, has made the Spirit the rule, remembrancer, and guide; *he shall teach you all things,* (a most extensive expression;) *and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you:* Not excepting, I suppose, his sermon on the mount, containing the four great precepts. Immediate revelation is, we see, scripture doctrine; it is also quite rational, because it proposes and affords helps to be had from no other principle.

I agree with the great *Locke*, if I remember aright, *that to take away reason, to make room for revelation, is much the same as to put out our eyes, the better to discern a remote star, by the help of a telescope.* No Being below one that is intelligent, is, I think, capable of divine revelation: Yet, as the best eye without adequate helps, cannot discover objects too minute for, or too distant from it, neither can the brightest human capacity *meerly of itself* understand divine mysteries, and so far as we see into such things, it is by the glass of divine revelation. It is an everlasting truth, *that God cannot lie:* And though we cannot, to the common understanding of man, nor indeed to any man, so clearly distinguish between inspiration and enthusiasm as in some other matters; yet from the great wisdom and power of GOD, the value and importance of truth to mankind, I conceive the infinite Spirit, *able and willing* to impress our minds in a self evident manner; and that there is a vast *essential, intrinsic difference*, between divine inspiration, and diabolical impressions; in the perception or feel-

ing these upon our minds. Some things we cannot comprehend as men, they are above our reach, it seems impossible to understand them, without an enlargement of capacity; an increase of the power, as well as of the means to know. In some things, to speak figuratively, we want glasses; in others, both eyes and glasses. All created beings, in what enlightened state soever, must necessarily be ignorant of some things relating to infinity, or finite might comprehend infinite. That great and interesting doctrine, the redemption of the world by **JESUS CHRIST**; a doctrine that all christians admit, and without which they *could not* be christians; has something in it so much above human capacity: so transcendantly mysterious, and unutterably gracious, that Angels cannot comprehend, tho' they desire to look into it. *1 Pet. i. 10, 11, 12.*

All this, which some may think impertinent to the argument, I apprehend may be essential to it: My view herein, is to exalt the holy, illuminating principle of divine light and life in man, as a certain touch-stone, for the interpretation of scripture, and trier of other the most specious inward impressions, and of all doctrines, pretended to be founded upon scripture; that so others, but my own friends *especially*, may take the right way to form a judgment of the doctrine under consideration.

But tho' we ought to be candid towards some professing christianity, with whom we differ in this article of war; yet as a society, we are I hope warranted, to make this doctrine of peace, one of the fundamentals of our faith; or a condition of religious communion, without which *no man* can expect to be owned as a member by us, and for want of which, *every* refractory denier thereof may justly be expelled the society. Not only in virtue of that common right, which every religious community is allowed to have in settling the terms of communion for the admission or rejection of members; but for other weighty reasons: Because the prophecies of the old, and doctrines of the new Testament so concur in our favour, that we have strong reason to believe there must be a people to forward this work in the world. And I have no doubt that our
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worthy elders, were this very people; in whom this doctrine was no imposture or delusion, projected by a single person or party, spread by fraud, corruption, or artifice: On the contrary, it had the suffrage of former revelations, and of late time, became the concern of different persons under a religious exercise of mind, far distant from, and *without* previously consulting each other. And it is my belief that our friends in the last century, came forth clothed with gospel authority, preaching this doctrine in much assurance and demonstration of divine power, from the *self same* inward spring of light and truth, whereby they revived, and exhibited other doctrines, evincing their integrity, through great and patient suffering. Such among us who have denied or slighted this doctrine, have I believe *first slighted* the inward precious monitions of truth in themselves, and adhered too much to their own understandings, whether common, or uncommon: Thus it was with me, or I had never drawn my pen against the society in defence of war. The inward intrinsick evidence of immediate inspiration in the mind, is I think of the same nature, and of the same indispensable authority, whether it reveals things *above* our reason, or things *obviously consonant* to reason. It is much easier to understand some doctrines when revealed, than to find them out by the exercise of our faculties; as it is much easier to comprehend the construction of a curious machine, than to invent it: Yet from the apparent reasonableness of a doctrine, some men have been apt to ascribe the first discovery of it to reason, not considering how much easier it is to understand and approve, than make a discovery.

Here now we are advanced something further, and *besides* inward strong persuasion and other collateral evidences (of no small authority whenever they occur,) have the prophecies of the old, the doctrines of the new testament, and practice of the first christians *pretty fully* on our side: Are not these things good evidence to a christian mind? and may we not say, the Almighty knows how to reconcile all difficulties, though we should not be able to see how this could be done? Yet of this we may be satisfied that he can and will do it; And even we ourselves

selves may, if we look *narrowly*, see a little into the manner of his doing it. And as there are some Casuists, who will hardly be satisfied with all we have urged; tho' to many it may be very weighty and rational; I shall endeavour to urge further arguments in defense of our doctrine of peace; to discuss the main point; to *distinguish* in some measure between fighting and magistracy; and do something at least towards shewing, how magistracy may be, and is supported on our principle. The reader is intreated to be solid, candid and deliberate; and we hope in concurrence with the foregoing arguments, to establish our doctrine on such a basis, as *cannot* on true christian principles easily be shaken. Should we be opposed by such as deny revelation, with arguments, militating as much against other christian doctrines, received by christians in common as against this doctrine of ours; a *direct answer will be improper*. We must first, if we answer at all, defend christianity; (and oblige such an opposer to dispute upon christian principles;) a work already much better done than I pretend to do it. And therefore I do not think myself obliged to defend this book, but upon christian principles. My reason for entering this caveat is special and peculiar.

I find no occasion to enquire, whether *the prime and fundamental laws of nature, were the dictates of divine wisdom written on the heart of man, &c.* It is sufficient for my purpose, *as to nature*, to consider man in his present condition.

Man, then by nature, according to my idea, is *so far* from being destitute of natural power; that self-defence, or self-preservation, as well now, as in former time, is a plain indubitable law of nature, strongly implanted in man and every living creature. Even *R. Barclay's* Apology, 4 Edit. p. 563, seems plainly to admit, that self-defence is of natural right; which clearly implies man's natural power of self-preservation. All this I take to be quite reasonable: But then I apprehend that God who created man, and is the great author of nature and the law of nature, hath reserved to himself a power to interpose,

pose, and make what alterations he pleases as to the law of nature, both in the *natural* and *moral* world. As this power is *unalterably* inherent in GOD; it may be exercised as he pleases towards man, mediately by the scriptures, and by instruments; and immediately by the Holy Spirit, promised to be the believer's leader and guide to the end of the world. By this authority our natural powers of self-preservation may be suspended in the matter of war, and we laid under an indispensable obligation to rely upon that providence, which is able to save to the uttermost all who rightly confide in it.

An *end* sought after, may be good, but the means used to attain it, may be evil. No good end, ought to be pursued or compassed by evil means. Providing for our families is an important duty; yet fraud, oppression, or rapine, are not to be allowed for making such provision: In like manner, self-preservation is an *end* laudable in itself; yet, if in some cases, the Almighty requires us, instead of using, to lay aside our natural powers, and rely upon his providence; under this circumstance, every effort of our own, is criminal and condemnable.

It is in no wise begging the question, but a fair and rational, nay, the only way of arguing, to urge the power, wisdom and providence of GOD in this argument. The thing we plead for, is no common topick, no human scheme or contrivance, but a divine plan, or at least, a part of it. The prophecies are declarations in GOD's name, by his immediate command, and therefore his veracity and honour, as well as the good of mankind, are immediately concerned in their accomplishment; which would be left uncertain upon any other or lower principle. The state promised must be fulfilled in human nature; but human nature in itself, wants both the will and the power to accomplish it. It is too weak to renew and preserve itself. It is rigid, tenacious and vindictive in its own defence; so far from doing good for evil, and enduring wrongs and affronts with the patience of a truly mortified christian, that it is not always in the way of justice content with an equivalent, *like an eye for an eye,*
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and a tooth for a tooth, but is often the *aggressor*. Wherefore, as the promise to set up in the gospel days the state of peace we plead for, was a supernatural immediate interposition in the minds of the prophets; there *must* for the accomplishment, be also, immediate supernatural corresponding intimations and ability in the hearts of all such, whom under the gospel, God is pleased to chuse, honour, and abase, as instruments in this great work: And we hope to make it pretty clear in the course of the argument, that men so chosen may in the case of war, forego their natural rights and powers without detriment (upon the whole) to themselves or human society.

The miseries and desolations of war, are on all hands allowed to be so very dreadful and terrifying, as to convince any reasonable man, how greatly *preferable* the proceedings of a court of civil justice, are, to the spoil and havock of war; so likewise in *some* cases, instead of private revenge, and being at full liberty to indulge evil passion and resentment, it must needs be much better, to have many disputes and contests, decided by cool impartial justice, where mens passions and prejudices *cannot* so easily interfere, but a civil constitution, examines and settles matters in debate, between contending parties, and after proceeding in a calm deliberate manner, according to evidence of fact, *relieves* and *protects* the innocent, and allots the delinquent, punishment, from the lowest degree of it, to death itself; and in the latter case, the *pardon* sometimes granted, or sentence mitigated; or where both are inconvenient; yet the time allowed for preparation, and means used to assist therein, is far more desirable and christian, than a sudden removal to the unprepared; *many* of whom, it's to be feared, fall in the day of battle, bloodshed and slaughter: Civil power therefore, duly administred, and war, are obviously distinguishable; the *one* punishing *only* the guilty, and sometimes sparing them too; the other destroying *both* innocent and guilty; and obliging the innocent to shed each others blood: Thus far does a civil constitution differ from war; and a sparing conscientious use of that constitution, *abundantly more*. Wherefore the most tender conscience, while for itself, it admits

admit the one but in part, may have *strong scruples* against the other.

If the prophecies are to be fulfilled by degrees, every man who is called to be an instrument in this work, being in the case of war, forbid the ordinary means of self-preservation, hath (if he obeys this call) in the nature and reason of things, a *good title* to the special providence of God; who never (I believe we may affirm it) in the course of his dealings with mankind, deprives the sincere and humble, of any privilege, without sooner or later, spiritually or temporally bestowing, at least, an *equivalent*. His care of his creatures, is the creatures reasonable expectation, and inseparable from infinite and unchanging goodness. He will therefore no doubt, take such as obey this doctrine, under his peculiar care: For without his special providence, they could neither rightly begin, nor go one step forward in this great work. To be called to a duty which requires supernatural qualifications, and be deserted to our own natural powers, would be *hard measure*; like a parent, who instead of discharging the paternal duty, cruelly exposes the helpless babe as soon as 'tis born to want and misery. In discharging the duty we plead for, the providence inseparable from it, is of equal security to a *nation, community, or magistracy*, as it is to a private person; whether we want much or little help in this way, the power of God is an inexhaustible fountain of strength and safety.

But to *prevent* mistakes, it may be observed, that the providence of God, in this, or other cases, don't always flow in the same channel, but is variously manifested: As in *blessing or punishing* such persons as are kind or cruel to his people. It is written, Psal. cv. 14. *He reproveth kings for their sakes*; and Numb. xxiv. 9. it was said of Israel, *Blessed is he that bleisseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee*. It is also to good men, manifested three several ways, as in *preventing, delivering out of, and supporting* under afflictions: And though God's wisdom and goodness appear in all these, yet the *latter, supporting under trials*, seems to afford the most room for christian heroism,
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and our doctrine as aptly tends to the practice of such magnanimity : Many bright examples of patience under sufferings did our noble antients exhibit to the world ; for they not only disused war, but found a patient suffering to be very often their lot and duty in other respects ; and I think the event hath shewed, that their faith, reliance, and resignation, had the most solid foundation ; that divine Providence in which they trusted, having not only inwardly supported, but in a great degree wrought deliverance outwardly. I remember to have read, that it was said by a late deceased *English* Lord, celebrated for his great wit and parts ; *That submission to the will of GOD in a state of affliction is the greatest magnanimity.* And as both the old and new Testament, the latter especially, teach abundantly the necessity and advantage of casting our care upon GOD ; if this duty be in any single case eligible in such as are called to peace, it seems to be in this, wherein we are so remarkably distinguished from the rest of mankind : For in war, the innocent and guilty, not only perish promiscuously ; but war drags the innocent from all quarters, to butcher each other in the open field ; leaving their families to great distress, or to pine away their days in hunger and sorrow ; bereaved of their natural support, the industry of the husband or the parent : Wherefore I think, that such as have faith enough, had better under all risks, commit themselves, soul and body and all that is theirs, to providence, rather than be active in such dismal scenes. For men forced from the plough and the spade, from mechanics, husbandry, and their families ; and pushed on by the pike and arbitrary power, to fight, kill and destroy, such as they have no quarrel with, or enmity against, may surely be deemed innocent, in *comparison* of the obdurate villain ; the midnight ruffian and murderer ; and yet so far nocent too, that they may be laudibly withstood by such as see no further than they do, (or not to the end of war) being by arbitrary power, or the custom or law of their country compelled to draw the sword : I do not therefore compare the mutual slaughter of these to downright murder ; and yet the destruction of these people in war, (whose condition is much to be pitied) by the hands of such as believe themselves redeemed from all war, would

too much resemble that black crime. The world, in my judgment, instead of despising, have great reason to look kindly on a people, who in a great cross to their own wills, have practised a doctrine, designed by providence, and naturally tending by degrees to deliver the world from the dreadful calamities of war.

Let a military man of common rank, set out ever so strictly upon the notion of defensive war; yet as war now goes, and has gone many centuries; a very tender conscience might soon find the field *very hot*: The waste and ravage made even too often by the defensive side upon the properties of the innocent, may well take the name of offensive war; and many services, at the pleasure of those in command, may be undertaken fore against the judgment of a very scrupulous soldier; in *every* one of which services, according to my former book, p. 33, there must be the same liberty of conscience in behaviour, as that on which war is first undertaken: For had not men this *christian liberty*, and did it not become them in this point (even though they admit defensive war) thus to think and act; I see not what title they have to liberty of conscience in any other case; or why human authority may not as reasonably prescribe creeds, and restrict by penal laws, a certain mode of worship not to be dispensed with in the least title, as to oblige a conscientious man to fight *against* his conscience.

It may here be *objected*, that we lay great stress on the argument drawn from the mutual slaughter of the innocent, and the grievous abuse of defensive war; to which I *answer*, it is well known, that we absolutely renounce all war: There are christians who cannot cut off their guilty enemies suddenly in battle, and unprepared for eternity; and the slaughter of the innocent makes war yet more terrible, and is a further argument against it, with such as are brought truly into the gospel state of peace. The like influence upon these minds have the horrid abuses of defensive war, whereby that which is at best terrible enough in itself, is made much more terrible. Several things not absolutely evil or unlawful in them-

selves, on account of abuse only, may have been *disused* by, or *prohibited* to certain persons. Infinite wisdom foreknew the dreadful abuses of defensive war, and this might, for any thing I can prove to the contrary, be one reason why he hath been pleased to prohibit it to some of his followers, on account of the extream difficulty at best of engaging consistently therein. But setting this entirely aside, as only a probable conjecture, and admitting (what is very far from being the case) that defensive war is always free from abuse or cruelty, and kept within the best bounds it possibly can: The question then at present is not, what the generality of mankind, or even some men of virtue and honour may in war laudibly undertake: But what men who not only assent to the scriptures in this point, but find themselves inwardly drawn to be instruments for their accomplishment; men blessed with communion with their maker, and prepared for heaven, would think eligible in war; whether these would have an immediate hand in the slaughter of the innocent, or be the cause of sending guilty unprepared souls in this sudden manner to the tremendous bar of God's justice; or, declining the means of self-defence, cast themselves upon God; who can not only save, or support them, but bless their self-denial and meekness for the *conviction* of others: Who is able to *support* under the most fiery trials, or deliver by ways unknown to man; and not suffer us to perish outwardly in the discharge of such severe unnatural duties of self-denial against war, without receiving to everlasting peace, and having a tender regard to such as are left behind exposed to hardships: For God has promised to be a husband to the widow, and a father to the fatherless; and it must be *peculiarly* so, where widows and orphans are made after this manner.

I am sensible this doctrine, and the Quakers for the sake of it, are thought weak and strange by many bright ingenious men; but I think their apprehensions too gross and *unrefined* to conceive aright of the purity and perfection of the evangelical state, or of the true worth of that doctrine which leads to it. This doctrine is not absurd in itself, or detrimental to mankind in general, or to those in particular

particular who hold it for truth ; because the same principle from whence it arises, makes its votaries (if consistent with themselves) good neighbours, and obedient subjects ; harmless, meek and peaceable in all stations ; no promoters of vice, which gives magistracy such great trouble.

Nor have the friends of peace embraced that doctrine upon a dry theory of the sufficiency of God's power to support and deliver, but from inward conviction, and a *certain* feeling sense of his holy quickning presence in the soul, giving a serenity and majesty of spirit, that can meet death with his terrors, and triumphantly say, oh ! where is thy sting ? It can laugh at the shaking of the spear, yea the stones of the earth, and the beasts of the field, are, or may be said in scripture sense and language, to be at peace with these, to whom death whether it come naturally, or by violence from others, is always an unspeakable blessing ; as they rest from their labours, and enter into life eternal. People professing this principle, and who are what they profess to be, humble, meek and lowly, will to the religiously discerning mind, appear to be the *best*, if not the *only* instruments in the hand of providence, for establishing universally, those glorious days of peace, which the *holy prophets* under the influences of unerring wisdom, have so solemnly prophesied of, concerning the latter days.

I hope enough has been said to *convince* such as are truly serious and candid, that our doctrine is not entirely against reason and scripture. It now remains to discuss the *main point*, or consider the greatest difficulty that attends this doctrine, or in other words to enquire, how magistracy is, or can be, supported upon our principle ? In doing which I hope to advance a pretty full answer to the strongest part of my former book, from p. 15 to 18, where it endeavours to demonstrate an *inseparable connection* between civil and military power.

War, *purely defensive*, is so far from being in itself evil or wicked, as *drunkenness, adultery, murder, theft, &c.* that in some cases it hath been, and yet to some persons
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may be a duty, and will hardly be otherwise, but from supernatural requisition and great self-denial. *It is not commanded to be laid aside as a thing in itself wicked, but as beneath that most perfect gospel state of peace, which GOD hath promised universally to establish in the world:* While therefore he is leading and exercising a *part* of mankind in this great duty, he *does not*, I am persuaded, deal with all in the same manner; but keeps, or at least, wisely and freely permits, many to remain under such *lower degrees* of illumination, where the natural right and duty of taking military care of themselves and others, may be incumbent upon them. And this *œconomy* in GOD, over and among his creatures, as it will, in conjunction with other arguments, mitigate, if not solve, the greatest difficulties urged against our doctrine, is, I believe, consistent with divine wisdom; though many minds among ourselves and in other societies may be *too narrow* to see and acknowledge it. This *œconomy* I intend to prove in the best manner I am able: But in the mean time, it is no novel conceit of mine, but a doctrine patronized, if not broached, by that great divine and able writer, *Isaac Pennington*: Let therefore every reader, but especially my friends, weigh seriously his words, as they stand in a small pamphlet, intitled, *The Doctrine of the People called Quakers, in relation to bearing arms and fighting, extracted from the Works of a learned and approved Writer of that Persuasion*. A great but deserved character. And the prefacer of this *extract*; a man, as I take it, of *exactly* the same note and ability as the *Enquirer*, tells us, p. 6, *that what he* (J. Pennington) *has written, is the real doctrine of the Quakers, we have the highest reason to believe, from the concurring testimonies of divers eminent men of that Society, prefix'd to his works*. Be pleased then to hear this great and good man, as follows,

Page 28. ---- “ I speak not this against any magistrates
 “ or peoples defending themselves against foreign invasi-
 “ ons, or making use of the sword, to suppress the vio-
 “ lent and evil-doers within their own borders: *For this,*
 “ *the present state of things may and doth require,* and a great
 “ blessing will attend the sword, when it is born up-
 “ rightly to that end, and its use will be *honourable*; and
 “ while

“ while there is need of a sword, the LORD will not
 “ suffer that government, or those governors, to want
 “ fitting instruments under them, for the management
 “ thereof, who wait on him in his fear, to have the edge
 “ of it rightly directed : but yet there is a *better state*,
 “ which the Lord hath already brought some into, and
 “ which nations are to expect, and travel towards.”

It is evident, that this great man holds forth plainly the divine *oeconomy* I have hinted above. We see it was his judgment that men using the sword in this gospel day, may be GOD's instruments ; and that herein, though not come to the *better state*, or summit of christian perfection, they may yet be good enough to use, or direct the sword to be used religiously in GOD's fear : When perhaps many would think that religion in all, instead of using the sword, would, if regarded, lead directly from the use of it ; but it seems, this writer, though a great advocate for our doctrine, thought *otherwise*, and I profess myself to be his *profelyte* ; though at present, if there are a few persons so pious, I should almost as soon expect to find the *philosophers stone*, as an whole army of such warriors : And I am persuaded a due regard to what may be urged upon his, and my principle, will require more benevolence and reflection of mind, than can be expected from unthinking bigotry. With that expression of the wise man's, *he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow*, many people in most societies seem to have small concern.

I admire the wisdom and charity of this writer, in his prudent and generous concessions, though some may think he thereby gives his cause away ; but I believe them so essential to the preservation of it, that what he writes is the very truth, and that without such concessions, it will be impossible to maintain our ground against a keen adversary. All attempts to explain and defend our doctrine, which go upon the literal sense of the precept, or consider defensive war as a thing in itself wicked, how speciously soever worked up, or received by shallow judges, instead of honouring and serving, have injured, a good cause, by multiplying many, if not endless, absurdities
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and contradictions, upon all such ill judged attempts to state and clear the controversy.

The *Enquirer*, p. 33. is pleased to tell us, *that war (defensive war) is a means not appointed of GOD, but invented by man, to supply the weakness of his faith, and the imperfection of his trust and confidence in GOD.* But this I think contrary to matter of fact and sacred record : Because war hath been often expressly commanded by the Almighty, and blessed by him for great and noble ends ; a sanction, sure never afforded to any practice evil in itself, and disapproved as such by him. It is also contrary to *J. Pennington's* doctrine, who asserts, that the sword in the present state of things, is necessary, and that religious persons may use, or cause it to be religiously used, in the fear of GOD, and with an expectation of his blessing upon it. I am therefore of opinion, that what the *Eng.* observes, p. 56, *that the Quaker never measures one man's duty by another man's conscience,* would have been more candid and pertinent to the present case, than his affirming war to be none of GOD's appointment, unless it can be shewn, that there is an essential difference between an *express command*, and an *express appointment*.

That the *force* of the arguments to be urged in justification of that divine œconomy, whereby we hope to solve the greatest difficulties, &c. may be the better apprehended and born in mind by the reader, I shall remind him of what has been offered in the beginning of the argument, in behalf of the certain and gradual accomplishment of the prophecies ; adding here something more to confirm my former arguments, and be a fit basis to build upon.

It seems then most consonant to reason, and the present condition of mankind, that the great work of universal peace, be gradually established. We teach *children* first, things plain and easy, and afterwards such as are more hard to learn. We indulge in their tender years, many things, which though adapted to that condition, are laid aside at riper age. Human prudence very often consists as much in timing as in doing things well : Many noble

noble designs have failed, only because ill timed in their execution. Infinite wisdom, we may be sure, does all things in the fittest time, as well as in the best manner ; suiting the manifestations both of his wrath and love, and adapting the discoveries of his will, to the condition of his creatures. The promise of a redeemer, was made to Adam just after the fall, yet God sent not his Son till the *fullness of time*, several thousand years after the promise was made. By *the fullness of time*, is meant the fit time, and that no time before was so fit for that memorable and visible display of God's love. The same unerring wisdom infallibly guides every other dispensation of providence, among which the gradual accomplishment of the prophecies is none of the least ; and though some persons may be unfaithful to such spiritual gifts, as would, if duly improved, lead to high attainments in christianity ; yet I cannot be so uncharitable, (I think I may say stupidly uncharitable) as to believe that every man in the world, or every man in this nation, or every man who has some regard to God's fear, and the good of human society, is required to believe and practise our peaceable doctrine. The *Laplanders*, in their northern clime, the *Hottentots*, at the *Cape of Good-Hope*, and the *Savages of America*, are in no good present plight, to receive the plainer truths, and much less the sublime mysteries of the gospel. And to go no further than our own wise nation, there are but too many in most, if not in every christian society ; who, though they say they believe the christian religion, yet know little more of it, either as a rational theory, or matter of inward experience, than a *talking bird* does of the meaning of words, it hath learned to gabble. The doctrine we plead for, is the *most singular* and self-denying, the hardest to apprehend, or at least, the most repugnant to human nature to put in practice, than perhaps any other christian doctrine : All mankind are by no means prepared to embrace it ; the fullness of time in that sense, is *not yet come* : And though it must and will in time, universally prevail ; yet we may for the present say to the generality of the world, even to many in knowledge and piety, far above the dregs and refuse of the people, in the words of CHRIST to his disciples, on

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another occasion, *ye cannot bear it now* ; which is so true, that to propose it now to every man, or to every nation, as matter of immediate belief and duty, would be as absurd, as to put *Euclid*, or *Newton*, instead of a *horn-book*, into a little child's hand, for its instruction. I consider the world as GOD's family, though with due allowance for the imperfection of comparisons, and so as not to make him author or approver of sin. In this family are many *different stations* ; some doing the higher, and some the lower duties and offices in it. Fidelity and diligence is the duty of the lowest station outwardly, and the way to rise higher ; in religion 'tis the same, *he that is faithful in the little, shall be made ruler over more.*

The words of the author I have quoted, will, I believe, have great weight with some solid thinking people of our own society, acquainted with the merit and depth of his fine writings : Not that I mention him authoritatively to any, but especially to those of other denominations ; yet *so far* as what he says, appears to be rational, and well founded in the nature and reason of things, it may be offered in our behalf as solid argument to all.

That divine oeconomy then, contained in his expressions, and contended for by me, *seems to arise naturally from the prophecies themselves, and the present state of mankind* : From the *former* we infer *strongly*, that some must be chosen to begin the great work of universal peace : From the *latter* it is evident, that great multitudes *are not* in a suitable condition to have this doctrine proposed to them, as matter of immediate belief and duty ; *the short question therefore is, what will providence do with these ?* My general answer is, it is their duty to be useful in other stations. And that I may answer as fully as possible, the strongest arguments contained in my former book, from p. 14, to 18, concerning that strong and inseperable connection there seems in the judgment of many persons, on some occasions, to be between magistracy and fighting, &c. *My particular answer* in the words, or to the exact import, of my former book is, That many of this part of mankind,

kind, not at present required to practice our doctrine, may be required by providence to be publickly useful to mankind, and as need be, or occasion requires, “to resist, pursue, or seize offenders, by force, to imprison, and secure, if need be, a fair and publick trial, and the infliction of punishments, against any who shall dare to interrupt or disturb it. To secure the good laws and public liberty, magistracy and government, against the few or many of its own subjects revolting into open disobedience or rebellion; to oppose and prevent the horrid murders, ravages and devastations of execrable abandoned villains, and finally, to guard the nation against the invasions of a foreign enemy.” *All this* for the public good may be effected, under the good providence of GOD; which yet is not confined to this method only, but capable of being manifested in many other ways. This part of the argument is so *very interesting* and important, that I had rather repeat, or diversify the same thing, that not be understood, though it may disgust some delicate palates.

I say then, that the œconomy we contend for, the *more deeply* it is considered, the more reasonable and necessary it appears; because I hope anon to make it plain, that GOD exercises an œconomy in the world in other cases, similar to, or more extraordinary than this: Because when and wherever the sword is necessary, *it fully admits it*. War not being absolutely evil in itself to all men; but only conditionally and circumstantially so to some; the use of it in some persons, as we said before, till things come much nearer their promised perfection, is clear enough, and the disuse of it in others, in order to bring forward that perfect state, is, I hope, altogether as rational. If some *must* be called to bear a testimony for the gradual accomplishment of the prophecies; others *not* so called, may bear honourably the sword to restrain and punish vice, and protect mankind; so that strange as it may appear to some, it may be one man’s duty to fight, and another’s to refuse it; and perhaps in some cases, the same person’s duty to do both, in different periods of his life; for there have been persons, who, upon new and strong convictions of

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mind, have laid aside that very sword, which in time past they had warred with, upon the worthiest motives. Nor are those persons differently engaged, to be thought unduly inconsistent with each other, but as different instruments in GOD's hand, *variously* but *not contradictorily* employed for carrying on the vast scheme of his providence, till war being swallowed up of peace, shall be no more; because how useful or necessary soever at present, *it will hereafter* be inconsistent with that most perfect gospel state, that will be assuredly established: A state perhaps vastly exceeding in glory man's original condition: But *I will* speak honourably of self-defence, as the strong call and duty of nature, 'till *superceded* by a higher call, for bringing to pass that most perfect state which GOD has promised, and of which his wisdom (pray seriously mind that) and not our reason, is *the only Judge*. A man's principle and practice may, I believe, be truly changed from war to peace, but can never come back rightly to war again: And though I believe the truth is on this, yet I found it much easier to write on the other side of the question. In this, as well as in some other points, we must patiently submit to all the reproach and ridicule, wherewith some men are pleased to encounter doctrines, they are no more able to confute, than comprehend.

The sword then, which in tenderness of conscience, thou canst not draw, may in another, (whom for wise reasons it hath not pleased GOD to lead in the manner he hath done thee) become the outward providential means to preserve thee and others, as well as himself; upon which principle, his arms may protect thy person and property, and thy virtue and piety be a defence and blessing upon his arms. And we are, as a people, deeply sensible of the divine goodness, and very thankful to the *English* government, for its protection of, lenity and indulgence to, tender consciences; the safety of whose principles, to government, experience hath abundantly confirmed; and to such an excellent civil administration, we wish ardently the greatest of blessings, and that neither feuds within, nor foes without, may disturb its quiet; that peace may be within her walls, and prosperity within her palaces; and

and that all the King's subjects, may be as nobly distinguish'd, by their steady loyalty and obedience to him, as he is, and ever hath been, by a just and faithful adherence to the good laws of this realm.

But if our opposers will strenuously maintain, what has never yet been proved, nor I believe, ever will, *that Quakerism lays open the very best of men, to the insults and abuses of the very worst*: I intreat them weightily to reflect upon the power and providence of that God, who is the Creator, Governor, and Judge of the world; who weighs the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance; who hath set bounds to the sea, and said, here shall thy proud waves be stayed; who will not suffer an hair of our heads to fall unnoticed to the ground; and then they may see, they have only been imagining vain things; in supposing (as a charge upon our principle) a state of things, wherein the good shall be entirely at the mercy of the bad, which God will never suffer to come to pass upon earth: What is meerly possible upon his being an idle unconcerned spectator of us and our actions, is a poor argument against our principle; because God is an omnipresent, allwise, and active Agent, not unmindful of the word of prophecy, through his prophets.

We have not received these prophecies from the *Sibylline* oracles of the heathen, but from the holy scriptures; holy men of God, testifying before-hand, of such extraordinary things to come, which the Holy Spirit only is able to bring to pass; and we now live in those last days, or dispensation of time, wherein God hath promised to pour forth of his Spirit upon all flesh, for the accomplishment of those things, which human nature is too unwise and impotent to do without it. We may therefore, as well pretend to *unite* fire and water, or things, the most dissonant and heterogeneous in their natures; or to separate those things which by nature are essentially connected: The sun without light, the spring without verdure, government without laws, kings without authority, subjects without obedience; and lastly, religion without worship and the fear of God, are not greater contradictions, than
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our doctrine without God's Providence, tenderly to watch over, and preserve it, (as an heaven born-offspring and plant of renown) through every stage of its growth and advancement, to its full completion.

In many ways hath God manifested his providence, and in many more is he able to do it, concerning which we are not able to make the least conjectures; so secret are his purposes, so unsearchable his judgments, and his ways past finding out; for after this, or a like manner, the apostle breaks forth, in admiration of God's dealings with mankind; in his rejecting the *Jews*, and calling the *Gentiles*, and afterwards determining to call the *Jews* again; and the oeconomy I plead for, is matter of as great admiration to me.

And even upon the addition of numbers to our side, the danger of the public safety may not be encreased; for when the *conversion* of mankind advances, and things shall seem to be ripening and pressing forward to the glorious state, foretold by the prophets; the wisdom of God, even all this while, can secure the peace and happiness of mankind, in freely permitting or appointing a temporal sword in the hands of well-disposed persons, sufficient to curb the vices of the worst part of mankind; and very possibly (in the main) there may never be permitted to live upon earth, one wicked lawless wretch, but there may be many more *able and willing* to oppose, or controul his measures, even to the winding up and fulfilling of the prophecies: But admit, the time to come hereafter, when every honest man, shall refuse to use or wear a sword; can our adversaries prove that Deity would not then interpose in favour of religion and virtue, so far as to prevent the whole world from becoming a den of thieves, or a scene of desolation? Were there even none to repel violence, or punish it, (which at present is far from being the case) yet the wicked having filled up the measure of their iniquities, and it becoming disagreeable to God's pleasure to permit them longer to remain in this world; he can in such manner withdraw his Providence from them, that evil spirits, and their own exceeding guilt, shall precipitate

tate their end, and bring upon them *swift destruction*. Remember that *traitor*, who after having perpetrated a very horrid deed, for a small bribe, came voluntarily and threw down the *thirty pieces of silver*, went away self-condemned, and became his own executioner. I think there was not then any human law, in being, to punish him for his crime, but God's Providence abundantly supplied the want of it. It may be said indeed, that this was an *extraordinary case*, so indeed it was; and *I am sure* that will be an extraordinary time, when every honest man in the world, or in any one nation, shall conscientiously refuse to wear, or use a sword; there will then, I think, be very few, if any rogues and villains left alive to disturb mankind; and should there be a few such; yet if they will not be reformed, or kept quiet, by the example and precept of the good and virtuous; nor can be overpowered by such measures, as may *consist* with the *disuse* of the sword; why then, the case being so extraordinary, it is neither to be enthusiastic, nor meanly to beg the question, but a *sound* way of arguing, to say, that the Providence of God may rationally be expected to interpose in such a special crisis of affairs, as effectually (though perhaps in a different manner) as it did in that of the arch-thief and traitor, *Judas Ischariot*.

In truth, all the difficulties urged against us, amount to little in the *present* state of things. In this nation the civil and military power are strongly connected, and I believe, like to be so for ages to come; nor do I think they will ever be rightly separated, but in a way perfectly consistent with the public safety.

If the *military* power, now providentially in being for the public safety, renders God's immediate Providence *less frequent*, because *less necessary* to that end; he will hardly permit the sword to cease, as an effect of his own wise economy, in the spreading of the principle of peace, without protecting mankind by other, or more immediate manifestations of his power and providence, than at present we seem to need or require. Such as conscientiously scruple the use of certain means, and such as are deprived of the
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means they do not scruple to make use of, are both objects of the divine regard. The past transactions of our own friends, are replete with many memorable instances of the divine care over them; and the pinch our adversaries object against our doctrine, was in great measure often their lot, who in days past, instead of finding succour and protection from the civil or military power, were dragged by soldiers from their habitations and meeting-houses, as the objects of popular fury, and made the butt of national dislike and resentment, having none but the divine Providence to rely upon; which inwardly or outwardly, and sometimes in both, was their never failing succour and defence, to such a degree, that they could say with the primitive saints of old, *that as their afflictions abounded, their consolations, did much more abound.*

The manner in which I have chosen to treat the subject, is, I hope so *very candid*, as well as orthodox, as not to minister the least just cause of offence to any one of the contrary judgment. Human policy on its own principles, must, I think allow, our present number is too inconsiderable to affect the public safety. And upon principles of religion, the publick can be no sufferer by our means. It is righteousness that exalts and secures a nation, more than the sword; and I am persuaded, (how weak soever it may seem to some) that the most religious persons in this land, have been a *better bulwark* than the sword, and by prayer and mourning, long stood in the gap, between an angry God, and a sinful people. Had there been but ten righteous persons in *Sodom*, God would have spared that and other wicked cities from the stroke of his own vengeance; how much more then, for the like reason, will he save his own people from the cruelty of wicked and unreasonable men? except where his wisdom sees best to permit suffering to be the lot of the righteous. Their being left to suffer and die in the discharge of their duty, is *no argument* of being deserted by him, the wise ends of whose Providence are served by suffering in some cases, as well as by deliverance in others. Many good men, have underwent cruel sufferings unto death, for testifying against those errors, which Protestants with one voice unite

nite to condemn. *The blood of the Martyrs has been called the seed of the church*, because their zeal and magnanimity hath inspired others with the same faith : And what man, that is truly religious, and resigned to the divine will, can desire deliverance from afflictions, but as God sees meet for him, and the cause of religion ?

I believe the civil and military power will never be rightly seperated, but in perfect concurrence with the public safety ; perhaps, in a way that will first be productive of such a general and glorious change in mens principles and manners, as to render the strongest objections of far less weight, than such as bring them, can easily imagine, and which I once thought *impossible* to be in any tolerable manner accounted for. In the time when peace is universally established, *the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.* Isaiah xi. 9. so that our doctrine is not the fruit of false zeal, or ignorance, but of true knowledge.

A parliament chosen by their constituents, (and all places of power, honour, and trust, filled by men fearing God, and hating covetousness) *without* intemperance, corruption, or commotion, supposes a very general *change* of mens principles and practices for the better ; and the same good principles uniformly operating in other respects, would give so powerful a *check* to vice in its very bud, as would go far towards putting us into possession of those golden (or better) times, talked of by Philosophers, or feigned by Poets ; the education of youth, would be religiously guarded from the common springs and inlets of those miseries and immoralities which afflict society, and are but the too common *effects* of irreligious education. Parents would be good examples to their children, as well as train them up by precept in the nurture and admonition of the LORD. All places of publick resort, tending to promote vice, as well those now *falsely* accounted innocent, as the more flagrant and atrocious, would, by the magistracy, be zealously suppressed. Virtue would then rear her drooping head, and vice become the speckled bird of the age ; this would make easy work for the

civil power, and the military have very little to do; and the objections urged against our principle, *vanish* almost into air. Under such a general care, but few, if any, atrocious offenders would appear; for as men deviate first in little matters; good examples and admonition, and in some cases, *time*, *confinement*, and *hard labour*, might reduce most offenders to a sense of, and sorrow for, their crimes: Whereas many poor wretches at present, are born among, and educated thieves, in contempt of all divine and moral obligations. Every *gaol*, is too much a seminary or school of vice; and civil government, as the case now standeth, in most nations, are for as little trouble as possible, and seem, in capital punishments for many crimes, to have considered *more* the present ease and relief of the community, than the eternal state of the offender, whose soul *because* of this state, is of more worth than the whole world. But some persons there are, (and more I hope there will be) not only redeemed out of all war, but who extend their christian forbearance so much further, that they will be very tender and sparing in the use of a civil constitution; passing by, and enduring many wrongs with patience, rather than resenting them, by prosecutions at law: For as GOD's wisdom is far deeper, and his mercy much greater, than ours; and as he often spares the wicked long, to afford them time and means for repentance; such as live in his fear, and are endowed with an higher degree of his wisdom and mercy, than other men, will shew them forth after the divine pattern and laws, and their behaviour will, no doubt, in many instances, be more wise, good, and merciful, than the best constitution framed upon human wisdom. And whenever, divine wisdom, truth, piety, and virtue, shall universally or generally reign in a nation; it will naturally draw the eyes and attention of neighbouring kingdoms and states upon it, who might be excited to copy after so fair an example, and to court friendship and alliance, as *Abimilech*, *Gen. xxi.* did with *Abraham*, and for the same reason, because they would see plainly, that GOD was with such a nation; nay, I believe, instead of the other nations being able to harm or destroy such a redeemed nation; the terror of GOD would be upon the nations round about us, as it

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was, *Gen. xxxv. 5.* in defence of the patriarch *Jacob* : Nay perhaps, so far from having an inclination to hurt or destroy, such a bright example, that though they should fall out ever so much with one another, yet all of them might (supposing the *English* to be this happy nation) revere, protect, and reserve us, as a standing, wise, and faithful umpire, to decide their differences, and make peace among them. Oh ! it is *impossible* for the brightest reasoner, with all his intellectual endowments, fully to conceive the wisdom that would cloath, and the power that would surround, that nation, whose confidence in God, shall not be the vain presumption of fancy, or enthusiasm, but the fruit of solid piety, and daily communion with heaven.

I have already endeavoured to shew, by argument, the safety of such a notion ; and shall add, out of the extract (from *J. Pennington's* works) p. 25, 26, what to me appears very much to the purpose. *Will not God preserve and defend that nation, whom he first teacheth to leave off war, that they shall not be made a prey of, while he is teaching other nations the same lesson ? God promised Israel of old, that when they went up thrice in the year, to appear before the Lord, according to his command, he would keep it out of the hearts of the nations from so much as desiring their land, (much more from entering and taking it from them) in the mean time, though they might seem watchful after, and sufficiently greedy of, such an opportunity, they having been cast out of the land, and having had it taken from them before, Exod. xxxiv. 24. The Lord also can now keep it out of the hearts of the nations, from invading or prejudicing that nation, whom he shall first draw into the peaceable spirit : Or, if he sees not good to do that, he can defend by ways, that man knows not of.----The eye, which the Lord hath given (or opened in) them, seeth the Lord and his strength ; and the heart, which he hath created anew in them, naturally feareth the everlasting power, which reacheth both to the body and soul for ever : But as for whole multitudes of nations, they are but as the drop of a bucket, and (in their greatest wisdom and strength) but as vanity, as the small dust of the balance, as nothing before him, and less than nothing to him.*

The *whole* piece, from whence these citations are made, is so truly excellent, that though many may spurn it (as too serious,) under the hard names of Cant and Enthusiasm, I am persuaded, contains more truth and good argument, *than any man is able* solidly to confute, and may give great satisfaction to some sober sincere inquirers after truth; while it may be doubted, if an angel from heaven, or any finite being, could put this doctrine into such a form of argument, as would satisfy some of our modern casuists, in their present situation of mind.

Were it possible, (which I think it is not) to prove, that laying aside war, is a flat contradiction to the very existence of civil government, under what propitious circumstances soever exercised; we should then, in obedience to the doctrine of the holy scriptures, and those inward convictions of the Holy Spirit, whereby it is set home on our minds; even then, I say, we should rather than fight with carnal weapons, not totally deny, but *leave* civil as well as military power, in the hands of *others*; confiding in the Almighty to lead us forward to such a trust in his power, as could subsist in peace and contentment, without ever administering laws ourselves, or taking advantage of the law, to redress our wrongs, by the prosecution of such as injure us. But let us suppose, (though not grant so, as to give away our argument,) that civil government, and war, are on some, (though not on all) occasions, in the present state of things, inseparably connected; yet still our doctrine destroys not civil government, because providence is able wisely to carry on both, or all parts of this œconomy, by different instruments, suitably principled and qualified, to be blessings in God's hand to mankind.

That Providence does exercise this œconomy in the world, I have little or no doubt, and the reasonableness of it, may, I think, be *further illustrated*, from the steps which divine wisdom seems to be taking in other matters; which I shall briefly run over, make a few inferences and observations, and then conclude the subject.

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There may be persons forward enough to affirm, that as all mankind, are visited and enlightened by that divine grace, which (*Titus* ii. 11.) has appeared unto all men, it would, if obeyed, lead all to the very same belief and practice; and that none stop short of learning, the same truths, others are taught, but through *their own disobedience*; for the Spirit of God, *say they*, is one in all, and cannot lead to, or allow of, contrary things.

Now, *as much* of this, as will comport with true christian charity, and the dealings of God with mankind, we shall readily allow; but if in some respects, it is contrary to both, 'tis hoped, those who think in this manner, may aim at a greater enlargement of mind: It is however admitted, (under some indispensable limitations) in regard to all such, who like the primitive christians of old, may be *peculiarly* gathered into one religious body, under the immediate teachings of the Holy Spirit, and of a ministry arising from this inspiration. Let these believe and speak the same things, and in all fundamental points, be joined together in the same mind and judgment, endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. *Eph. iv. 3.*

But if an equality of growth in religion, and universal agreement, be contended for, I take it to be *extreamly* rigid and severe: For though the Spirit of God never contradicts itself, yet I think it may make greater discoveries to one man, than it does to another, without implying the least absurdity, though the effect will in some cases be a disagreement of sentiment.

Upon principles of reason and charity, it is surely next door to a demonstration, that any doctrine must be *extreamly rigid and severe*, which condemns to everlasting misery, the very best persons in many societies in the world, be the principles to which such general assent and obedience is required, of what kind soever; the case will be too much the same to be granted in any: But let it be supposed upon *our* principle; into what judgment shall we go? and what will be the portion of the very best persons

persons in many other churches and societies in the world, (who have not embraced our fundamental principle, nor been led thereby in the same manner we have) but the wrath and displeasure, instead of the approbation of heaven? I have some things to offer against the present necessity, of an invariable agreement amongst all mankind, in every religious article.

That *vast multitude*, spoken of Rev. ix. which no man could number, consisted of all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people; souls, who no doubt, during their vital union with the body, and residence on earth, *had been of various*, and possibly opposite, sentiments in many points: And even many in this day, who do not know religion in that brightness and purity, we profess and maintain, shall, I doubt not, come from the east, and the west, and sit down (with *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*,) in the kingdom of God, when, it may be well if some who despise them, as out of the pale, and having no right, but to the uncovenanted mercies of God, (for such bigotted stuff I have read) be not shut out of this kingdom themselves.

Instead then, of excluding all, *Papists and Pagans, Mahometans and Jews*, &c. the kingdom of God, for resisting his grace; it seems both *reasonable* and *charitable*, to admit, that some, and, I hope many, of these vast multitudes, have been, are, and will be, persons, according to their understandings, fearing God, and working righteousness; or when they err, and do amiss, are concerned to recover their peace, and regain the divine favour, by *true repentance* and amendment for the future.

Men are *disparate* in their natural abilities, and *why not* in their spiritual endowments, seeing both proceed from the same giver? This is certainly the case; and as much as mature age, and childhood differ in understanding, so much, or more, does christian knowledge in this nation, exceed the superstition and blindness of many other lands: We read in scripture of *five, two, and one* talent; that where much is given, much is required, and where little, but little is expected; This is altogether reasonable; tho'

it by no means agrees with the doctrine I oppose; a doctrine too much like that of the Papists: *No salvation out of our church.* But further,

This doctrine, if true, throws an indelible odium upon many martyrs; who laid down their lives, in testimony to those truths, and against those errors, of which, after a long and dark night of apostacy, we believe the Spirit of God had immediately convinced their understandings. It doth not, methinks, seem probable, that *John Hus*, who was burnt alive, at *Constance* in *Germany*, in the year 1415, would have been so gloriously upheld in that fiery trial, if, as this doctrine supposeth, he had been at the same time disobedient to the Holy Spirit enlightening him to see other great errors, which he never condemned, nor testified against, and therefore we have the utmost reason to believe it did not please God to convince him of every error, or innovation in christianity. Obedience unto death, in one, or a few points, cannot easily be reconciled with *unfaithfulness* in others at the same time. The reasons of disobedience in such cases, are, human interest, fear of punishment, disgrace, or the like; but surely we must grant, that the same holy zeal, which in opposition to every such motive, warmed this good man's soul, would have led him to bear the same faithful testimony against other false doctrines, had his understanding been opened to detect them; as he did against those for which he joyfully suffered. The testimony he did bear, deprived him of life and other human enjoyments as was the case with many others: So that the opinion we oppose, is not only highly uncharitable, with respect to some of the best of men, and martyrs, but supposeth them to have been disobedient to God's grace, in such a season of christian magnanimity and constancy, as would not allow of any of these motives to disobedience to have room in their hearts: Not but we allow, that too many through unfaithfulness to what they do know, instead of coming up in the work of their souls salvation, become *hard and dark* even in those points wherein they were once enlightened: But had this been the case with *John Hus*, and several others, they would hardly have born such noble

ble testimonies at the stake, or the names of martyrs in succeeding generations.

Our charity should also be extended to many who never suffered martyrdom; and in behalf of some Protestants in *England*, &c. who see not in all points as we do; but yet I hope are sincerely desirous to approve themselves acceptable to GOD. Our argument, while it provides for the *best*, shuts out the worst in all societies under heaven, from the divine approbation.

GOD and his truth, are, I confess, eternal and unchangeable; it was Satan and his emissaries that *first seduced* mankind, and have brought by degrees, the world into its present deplorable condition: Out of which Providence is able to redeem the world, and taking such steps as import a gradual reformation to be his design, breaking in with his light upon mens minds, or providentially helping in other respects; *when, where, and in what* degree best pleaseth him, who worketh all such things after the council of his own will, ever consistent with unerring wisdom and goodness and the condition of mankind; of whom many through the prevalence of education, contend earnestly for things egregiously foolish and wicked, under the notion of stupenduous profound mysteries; things, which *unperverted*, and much more enlightened reason detests and condemns. Such is the condition of a great part of mankind; *such the divine pleasure* for the present to permit it to be. If any will say, all is owing to wilful obstinacy and rebellion against better knowledge; I think a moderate degree of christian charity will resolve it into unavoidable ignorance: For while many of us have superior privileges of several kinds; great part of the world, seem *at most* to have *no other* true convictions of conscience, than such as reprove their vices and immoralities in practice, but never, perhaps, make them once uneasy in respect of false doctrine: So far from calling in question the absurd principles of their education, that nothing, I believe, would raise their indignation higher, than to hear them denied or disputed as such impositions and superstitions deserve. So that

exact

exact uniformity of sentiments, or seeing and believing alike all the world over, is so far from being a reasonable duty, that it should not be too rigidly applied in any one single society; not even in that, which comes nearest to the truth of christianity, without due allowance, for the different states and attainments of Christians. *Him that is weak in the faith receive you, &c.* Rom. xiv. 1. And upon another occasion, *Pilip. iii. 15.*--- *Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: And if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.* Between the time of a man's being otherways minded, and the time of having his mind changed by revelation, an intermediate time little or more, whether a day, a week, or year, &c. is imply'd or supposed: In which time it must be the duty of a weak or unsatisfied member to wait upon GOD for the revelation the text mentions. By the same rule then, ought the church to wait with patience and charity upon all such members, who want to be better satisfied in some points, and appear to be lovers of truth, and sincerely seeking after it in the properest manner.

I would have these things well considered by some persons, whom GOD hath distinguished with excellent gifts in his church. It was even after the apostle *Peter* had preached with such energy and effect, that many were pricked to the heart, that the sheet in a vision was let down from heaven, to cure him of his bigotry in a certain point, wherein, as one might have thought, he had before been sufficiently instructed.

It is indeed, *very far* from appearing, that the Spirit of GOD visits or leads all men alike, or that his commands have been in all times, conditions, and places, the same. The Mosaic Law came to the *Jews* only, I mean the ceremonial part of it, and was no further binding on their neighbours, than as they might have good opportunity to be convinced of its truth and authority. And even this law, so highly expedient as to be established by divine wisdom and command at one season; was afterwards (as to the ceremonial part) *intirely disannulled by the same authority*: Which affords an instance (agreeable to

my former observation on defensive war) wherein the *same things* were enjoined as duties, and *laid aside* as no duties, *in* and *by* the self same persons ; no less than the persons of some, if not all, the apostles, and many of the first converts to christianity : Most of these had been *Jews*, and as such obliged to obey the law of *Moses* : But when they had received the gospel fully, it was their duty to forego the law, and preach it down as they did, as not binding on the conscience. Nor does, that I know, either this, or any thing similar to it, impeach the divine wisdom, or infer contradiction, any more than it is a reflection upon the skill or honesty of a good physician, to allow that to his patient at one time, which he forbids at another ; or to treat differently those under his care, as their cases are various. Upon such a prudential principle, there is no doubt, but the Mosaic law in part was established. It was a kind of *middle dispensation*, consisting of extreamly different parts, which taken collectively, though vastly beneath the gospel, was a divine display of knowledge, far above the then general state of mankind. And no doubt, the *best law*, which the best and most divinely favoured people in the world, were in the general, then capable of receiving from the supream Law-giver.

God doth not in general by violence impose truth and virtue upon mankind ; but gently wins the understanding, by motives adapted to persuade a reasonable creature : And to set some sublime truths, before many, it may be, millions of depraved mortals, would be like casting pearls before swine, and giving that which is holy unto dogs, which the disciples were commanded to avoid ; and, no doubt, spiritual gifts are bestowed with the same caution. And as it was formerly mens different states and conditions, which was the cause of God's dealing variously by them ; there is yet in the world, disparity enough, to admit, that God is *yet dealing with mankind in like manner*, and both in his manifestations in time, and his justice in eternity, acting suitably to the great variety of their conditions ; precisely conformable to which is to be understood that everlasting rule of equity and right, laid down by the

apostle

apostle in the second chapter of his epistle to the *Romans*, from which the judge of all the earth will never depart. *God will render to every man according to his deeds : To them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality ; eternal life : But unto them, that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness ; indignation and wrath ; tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, (because most enlightened) and also of the Gentile.---- For there is no respect of persons with God.*

Some, who call themselves christians, and dream of their being the elect people of GOD, might do well to consider by *what authority, or to what good end*, they interpret certain after parts of this epistle, relating to faith and works, and the famous twin brothers, so as to establish the worst * and wickedest of all doctrines, and make the apostle glaringly contradict himself.

The apostle *Paul*, it is true, humbly characterizes himself, as one of the greatest of sinners, because he had persecuted the church of GOD : But sin may be considered in a two-fold way ; the *motive* and *act* ; because in some cases, one may be *evil*, and the other good. Persecution of GOD's people, is in its self a very great evil ; but to intend the service of GOD therein, is a good motive ; the very same which actuates the best of men, in the best of actions : So on the other hand, good deeds, arise sometimes from evil motives, which cancel to such minds the goodness of the act. For instance, the liberty of conscience, which King *James II* gave his subjects, was a good act ; yet if he did this insincerely, not for the real love of his protestant subjects ; but in the end to subvert liberty, and establish Popery ; the badness of his motive,

* I say, the *worst and wickedest of all doctrines*, because, it resolves all things, consequently every bad doctrine and wicked practice, into the free and unchangeable ordination of GOD. See the ASSEMBLY'S CATECHISM.

divested him of the merit of giving liberty. And why then, in times and cases of unavoidable ignorance, may not good motives excuse such who ignorantly do wrong, under a strong persuasion and desire of doing right? All human virtue in the most strict and proper sense, *is* and *must* be relative; and he who takes away, or does not make due allowance, for a man's motives in all he does, perverts human agency, and makes man no better than a machine. The proud Pharisee pleads the merit which he hath not, while the sincere humble minded man is apt to lean the other way; placing some of his own actions in a worse light, than for ought we know, they may stand in the view of an all-knowing and impartial judge; though it is far more safe to err on this side, than the other: But had *Paul*, after his conversion, turned persecutor again, he had been indeed, a very grievous sinner, both in *motive* and *act*, far beyond what he was, or could be, when he did persecute the church of God. I am sensible it may be objected, that the LORD's answer to *Saul*, ---- *it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks*, imports, that he had before that time sinned against the convictions or reproofs of the Holy Spirit in his own mind: If this be granted, it will not follow, that every man in the world, sins against such convictions, whenever he does such things as are wrong in themselves. And as to the *words* themselves, I rather think, they relate to this extraordinary call from heaven to *Saul*, and that remorie of mind, which would have been his portion, had he continued to persecute: I don't remember, he any where says, that before this time he had been by any such convictions made sensible of his fault; but on the contrary, Acts xxvi. 9. *I verily thought* (says he) *with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth*. And here I dismiss these observations, which I think deserve to be thoroughly considered by some good persons, under several denominations of the christian religion, who may be in some danger from the sour leaven and spirit of the Pharisee.

To apply then, the foregoing observations for the illustration of our main point, it *must* be diligently considered,

dered, that as God in the various and wise dispensations of his providence, makes many merciful condescensions to mankind, labouring under such errors and prejudices, which are in themselves *really wrong*, and repugnant to truth; he may well be supposed in behalf of defensive war, which in it self *is not wrong*, to exert his providence through proper instruments for the preservation of mankind. Those errors and prejudices, came not in by his appointment, nor are justifiable as natural rights and duties, how excusable soever they may be in some dark corners of the earth. But as self-preservation is a prime (sometimes called the first) law of nature, such a care of ourselves is *innocent* and *warrantable*, and such right and practice, not to be given up, but upon supernatural requisition; nor can I suppose the Bible alone, of what authority soever, is sufficient in this case, to point out and require this duty of man, as a meer moral agent, but that divine light in the mind, is absolutely necessary to shew it us clearly, and divine power as needful to enable us to walk answerably thereto.

We Protestants generally allow, there was, at least, a divine permission, if not a concurrence, in providence, in favour of *Henry VIII*, his renouncing the Pope's supremacy, though that Prince might not do it on the best motives; yet the thing being in itself good, providence might *concur* with, and prosper it, especially considering, that *better persons*, laid hold of this favourable conjuncture, to promote as far as in them lay, religious liberty. As much then, if not *more*, in war of the best kind, where the motives are good, may the Almighty be supposed to bless and prosper that sword, which by such as *see no further*, is drawn conscientiously in defence of liberty, and for the preservation of mankind. Self-defence being under these circumstances a natural right and duty; for such persons and cases, may be accounted nearly parallel to some under the old testament, which God commanded, and in which he eminently appeared to give success; which he hardly would have done, had war of the best kind been a meer human invention, absolutely repugnant

to his will, and a contradiction to the dependance of man upon his maker.

King *William III.* was a great warrior, and a great blessing to *England*, as he interposed for its deliverance, in a *trying time*, when the liberty of the subject, under a specious solemnity of preserving it, was secretly undermined: And the great Duke of *Malborough*, instead of being convinced of our principle, was a glorious instrument in a warlike way, to punish the ambition and perfidy, and give a *timely check* to the increasing power of the House of *Bourbon*.

From what has been laid down, we may strongly conclude, that, though a measure of divine grace according to scripture, is given to every man, yet there may be an infinite diversity in degrees, and all things considered, it seems even *impossible*, that it should by the giver, in every age and person, be designed to make *precisely* the same discoveries, and exalt to the same degrees of knowledge and perfection.

The use of *means* we reject not, nor does the Almighty, when rightly adapted to their respective ends, without clashing with other, or higher, and more important ends. The faculties of our minds in contriving, the strength and aptitude of our bodily organs to assist, in carrying such contrivances into execution, in a vast variety of instances for the mutual benefit of ourselves and others, is a plain demonstration, that providence has made the use of means our *indispensable* duty. But then, it is as reasonable, that he should have in himself, the sovereign right to restrain, if he sees meet, the very means which he appoints, or, which is the same thing, in this argument, prohibit, the use and enjoyment of those good things he has given to man. This is as reasonable, as for the possessor of an estate, to have the power in disposing of it by will, to subject it to the payment of certain legacies, or tie it down to a small annual acknowledgment to perpetuate the remembrance of the donor. God has given to man no powers or privileges, but what for

as good, and better reasons, known or unknown to us, he can take away at his pleasure; suspend, restrict, or prohibit, the use or enjoyment of them. This sovereign power, hath often been exercised towards man. In Paradise, (supposing the history to have been externally true) by *prohibiting* the tree of knowledge to our first parents. In *commanding Abraham* from his kindred, and native land, where he had a natural-right to be. In the *Jewish polity*, by *numerous prohibitions* of things given to man, for his natural use, and to which he had therefore a natural right. In several other cases, we might mention, and *particularly*, in the establishment of our doctrine, the natural right and power of self-defence is *suspended*. The fulfilling of the prophecies, is an high and important end, with which an universal and continued indulgence of war must necessarily clash and disagree. War shall universally cease hereafter; it is therefore no absurdity for it now to cease in some; the providence of GOD can abundantly make up this loss; confirming his antient promise, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*; so that we may say boldly with the Psalmist, *The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man can do unto me.*

Our doctrine, thus connected with providence, guarding it against the fury and contempt of the world, and the world from receiving any harm by this doctrine; until it arrive at its *promised* pitch and period of glory, wherein all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, is I hope, a sound and orthodox opinion: But on the contrary, 'tis a vapour, or bubble, a phantom, or shadow, a meer non-entity, or castle in the air, folly, madness, presumption, and what not, that is ridiculous or preposterous, if once it be separated from GOD's providence: This, this, is its *summum bonum*, and all in all, its very life and soul and support. If GOD's blessing may be expected to render effectual those means, which have a natural tendency to obtain their ends; *much more*, may GOD's special providence be relied on, where we forego the use and benefit of such means at his command. But there is need of as much care that we take not up this doctrine, meerly by imitation or tradition, as that we don't

don't forsake it against the purest inward convictions of mind. As I agree with *J. Pennington*, in that wise benevolent doctrine of his, from whence I have deduced arguments, that, I hope, will abide the test of reason; I do also concur in what he further says, that *there is a better state, into which the Lord hath already brought some, and which nations are to expect, and travel towards*: And I also am persuaded, he would, if alive and present, agree with me, that 'tis GOD's work to bring nations to this better state; and that the generality of mankind, are not now in a suitable condition to receive and obey this doctrine; no more than the impotent man without help, could step timely into the healing pool of *Bethesda*: No more than the shrub, and the weed, can lift themselves to the stature of the tall oak and the cedar; the pigmy be a giant, or the glitter of a remote star, equal the sun's meridian brightness. Not to stretch themselves beyond their measure, but to be faithful in their present gifts and stations, waiting if able, for the better state, in readiness to step forward at the word of command, is all that is required, and all that the generality of mankind are now able to do; and blessed is that servant, who, or wherever he be, *that when his Lord cometh, shall be found so doing*. And thus, I hope, enough has been said, to justify the œconomy in GOD towards man, we plead for, and our own peaceable doctrine, as deriving no small strength from this œconomy.

It is easy to make profession of our doctrine in these calm days; but it is an *high attainment* to bear a testimony so contrary to flesh and blood, as it ought to be born, in a time when it may be put *close* to the test. In which case, he that is faithful, had need to be redeemed from this world, and walk in close communion with his maker. And I doubt not on the contrary, when the greatest danger in the late Rebellion, seemed to threaten this nation, but that too many outside professors of this principle, who may read this, men of little faith and great substance, were exceedingly terrified, and put their trust in the arm of flesh, more than in the power of God for deliverance, notwithstanding that dreadful denuncia-

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tion of the prophet in the name of the LORD : Jeremiah xviii. 5. *Thus saith the Lord, cursed be the man, that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.*

In this testimony *too few* who profess, and believe it to be a gospel doctrine, may be rightly qualified to stand in the day of trial ; the judgment in what is right, may easily exceed our obedience ; not but the same which convinces, will, if duly regarded, give power to obey. Our forefathers were inflexibly exemplary herein. They embraced the principle itself in a most solid religious manner, not from a mean dastardly temper, to *sneak behind* others for a bulwark, and afraid of danger themselves ; for some of them had been men of tried valour, and distinguished intrepidity in the dangers of the field : Witness the famous *John Lilbourne*, and others, who might be named. That inward spiritual warfare, to which they were afterwards turned, required more fortitude of mind than the outward and fleshly bustlings and contests, not only on account of their religious exercises, which were many and great within, but because their testimony subjected them to indignities and abuses, more terrible to military valour than to face armies. So far were they from *making an easy and unperceiv'd transition to the doctrine we profess*, as the Self-defence, p. 51 suggests, that I believe nothing but the most satisfactory convictions of mind, could have induced them to lay down the sword, in opposition to what had seemed to them to be a plain and positive law of nature. It was no small or trivial thing, for men of courage, to lay down their arms, and by faith and patience, to encounter the most provoking contumelies, affronts and indignities ; and by the gospel weapons of intreaty and meekness, example and long-suffering, have the courage to *stem the torrent* of pride and persecution, superstition and impiety, though countenanced by the highest human authority and examples : All this they did, with such *admirable* patience and heroism, as neither envy, nor time, nor the unfaithfulness of too many of their progeny, shall ever be able to cancel or obliterate ;

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and I doubt not, but they are entered into an everlasting quiet, *where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest for ever.*

Many good persons would doubtless be glad to see this important doctrine set in a plainer light; to have it made as clear to the reason of man, as are on our minds the inward convictions of its being really our duty: And the like candour, whereby I have retracted my former book, obliges me to confess, there may be some little niceties, not fully accounted for in *this*, to the satisfaction of some great casuists: I should indeed, much admire, to find such a subject freed from all manner of difficulty, when generally acknowledged and much plainer truths, may be liable to many doubts and perplexities.

If I have not explained the subject to the satisfaction of the most critically orthodox; perhaps some hints have been given, which abler pens may improve to the advantage of the cause. If any persons expect to see the doctrine clearly demonstrated from scripture and reason, I have done my best in both, for the present: The task is not so easy as some may imagine. If such as expect great things in this way, *would try to do it themselves*, it would perhaps go far towards curing them of such expectations: And yet I cannot but hope, that the wisdom of God, and his providence manifested in the œconomy we contend for, may, if thoroughly and religiously considered together with our other arguments, be in the main, pretty sufficient provision against all the arguments contained in the Self-defence, and against all I remember to have read that has lately been published against our doctrine in *Pennsylvania*; and may, I hope, be found strong enough to enervate all that can be advanced against it, *upon true christian principles.*

I have this satisfaction, that I have delivered, these my *second*, and I hope (as to the side I have now taken) last and best thoughts upon war, in a candid and impartial manner: Such as would fairly overthrow our arguments upon

upon christian principles, seem obliged to make out the following things ;

In the first place, they must shew ; That 'tis more reasonable to suppose that all mankind shall be changed at once into the state that the prophets have predicted, than this state shall first commence in individuals, and thence by degrees overspread the world.

2dly, That the spirit of CHRIST is not the best expounder of the holy scriptures, and the rule of a christian under the gospel.

3dly, That GOD makes the reasons of every religious duty, as well as the duty itself, plain to every man.

4thly, That there are no doctrines, agreed to by all christians, as difficult to investigate, and hard to comprehend, as this doctrine.

5thly, That this peaceable doctrine, is not good for individuals and for the whole ; or that the wisdom of GOD, while it leads some to believe and practice this doctrine, his providence does not fully provide for the safety of the whole ; by guarding the doctrine from the resentment of the world, and the world from receiving any harm by the doctrine, until it arrive at its promised period and pitch of glory, *wherein all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.*

6thly, Let themselves shew, That as the military power now providentially in being for the public safety, renders GOD's immediate providence less frequent, because less necessary to this end, that he will suffer the sword to cease, *as an effect* of his own wise œconomy in the spreading of the principle of peace, without protecting mankind by other, or more immediate manifestations of his power and providence, than at present seem to be absolutely necessary.

7thly, and lastly. Let none blend and involve the case of a person, apprehending this affair as we do for ourselves, with one who believes, and for that reason practices quite otherwise: Here mutual charity should flow. In some special duties besides this, that faith and conduct may be prudent and requisite upon religious obligations and principles, which without such special obligations, and upon common principles of nature and reason, would be altogether imprudent and unjustifiable.

These are the matters, and perhaps some others not to be overlooked, which an opponent, would he acquit himself well, must carefully attend to, by refuting the premises, or shewing the conclusions above, not to be well drawn.

Having thus concluded the subject, I shall add a caution or two. Let none who entertain a belief of the providence of God, and the doctrine of immediate revelation, be *seduced* by the arts of such men, who rather than let our christian doctrine stand secure, make no scruple to pull down and destroy all revelation along with it. Art thou convinced as well from experience as scripture, that a divine light, the light of CHRIST, spoken of *John* i. shineth in thy soul? Hath it not discovered some truths, led to the practice of certain duties, and given thee much peace in thy obedience? Wait humbly then, in the same light for information in the doctrine of peace, and if upon this trial, thou findest the same concern here, and the like consolation in bearing this testimony; oh! deny it not before men; rebel not against the clear and strong convictions of the Holy Spirit, or lose the peace he gives for the sake of worldly conformity or convenience, or because thy reason cannot clearly investigate every religious requisition. Of imagination, priestcraft, and superstition, as much as thou wilt, beware, yet take heed of contending with thy maker: There is more true reason as well as true peace, in submitting to him than in *rationation* whatever: And though some things, at least for a time, may seem very mysterious, yet as thou art

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fully attentive, the intimations requiring thy assent, will be very strong and clear to thy understanding, and *never* lead thee into any faith or practice subversive of right reason, or incompatible with the perfections of thy maker. This, or a like conduct in some points, or in some degree, persons of all christian denominations must pursue, or become Deists; nor can they stop here, for even in what is called the religion of nature, are some points not to be fully comprehended by mortals, and so they must humbly acquiesce, (and may therefore come back to christianity) or run into Atheism; the *sink* of all irreligion and impiety, and beset with difficulties far more insuperable and inexplicable than all true christian mysteries whatever; and it may be feared, that some perversely blind incurable creatures, must be referred for instruction to an awful tremendous futurity, when their entrance into the incorporeal world at which they now laugh, will shew them at once their misery and mistake, when alas! it will be too late for a remedy. *Take the unprofitable servant, bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness, where shall be weeping and wailing for evermore, because their worm dieth not, &c.*

Here I should have concluded *this*, but that some other parts of my *former book*, may have had an evil tendency; therefore intreat, that whatever has been amiss in me in time past, I may now be freely permitted to expatiate sensibly upon a few subjects, with the youth, and some of riper age in our own society.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the father is not in him: Such a solemn expostulation, together with other denunciations *against* covetousness; may make it a matter of admiration and regret, that any man under the christian name, should *dare* to be covetous; and yet this execrable sin has spread wide in our society, as well as in others. The *religious*, who chuse with *Moses*, rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season, *are wise, because*

because they have an eye to the recompence of reward ; tho' they are counted fools by the worldly wise, who suspect the after state and its rewards to be chimerical. Other passions, irregularly indulged, if they *forfeit* the blessedness of the life to come, let us taste some of the sweets of this as we pass through it ; so that in both cases here is something in hand, or in reversion ; but that monster, the miser, sins after a most senseless and stupid sort ; his covetousness entails present as well as future misery upon him, and robs him of the blessings of both worlds, he has no heart to enjoy the one, nor any title to the other ; nor does the evil always rest upon himself alone. I have often thought, that what has cost the parent his own soul in the acquisition, may have endangered, if not utterly ruined the child's in squandering it away. Let them but reflect as rational creatures, and they soon may grow sick of inordinate care, for common experience, (which no unbeliever hath yet presumed to deny) infallibly teaches them, (as well as other men) that the fashion of this world passeth away, and the end of all things here, as to them, is at hand : Time, which has laid the former generations in the dust, with equal solemn pace, treads close upon this, and will soon lodge the miser in that small silent and solitary habitation, where there is neither work nor device, nor gold to cheer his little fordid heart.

Wherefore *much happier* they, whose strong desires and endeavours to be rich, have been kindly defeated by providence, as it may have helped them to discern the emptiness of all transitory possessions, and to lay up a nobler treasure in heaven, according to CHRIST's admonition. *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves, treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal.* Matt. vi. 19, 20.

Some persons far from being caught with the bait of covetousness, have *deviated* to the other extream, and instead of exampling their offspring in the way of self-denial,

cial, have themselves been captivated with the fopperies and vanities of this world, and ashamed of the simplicity and plainness of their profession, as too unworldly, have trained up their children in such manner, as to render them when grown up to maturity, ashamed of the profession we make, which they have accordingly deserted; nor is this, so much matter of admiration as regret. Our worthy elders and forefathers in CHRIST, could experimentally recount the noble acts of the LORD, not only outwardly manifested in a time of severe persecution, but in the *heights* and *depths* of their christian experience, through which he was pleased to lead them. Religious retirement in their families, as well as public worship to wait upon GOD, was the religious practice of those times: The Bible and other religious books were occasionally read to their solid improvement in the best things; but alas! a few noble exceptions to the contrary, how fallen and degenerated are we? Parents themselves, are not only enemies to the cross of Christ; but plays and romances, and other polite essays, now polish some of our youth to shine in modern conversation, and the spirit of this world makes them *emulous* to excel in the reigning accomplishments, and scientific acquisitions of the times.

There seems to have been *much benefit*, in that singular, immodish, and (as some think) foolish appearance, which we as a people have made in the world; not only as it may have been a useful test of our own love to GOD, but an excellent preservative from evil company: Plainness of habit and speech, come with a very disagreeable mein into bad company, and are yet more averse to the liberties taken therein: Our singularities therefore, (how strange or uncouth soever they may seem to many) besides other reasons that might be given for them, may be an additional fence to our morals and virtue, by strengthening and invigorating our native modesty, and thereby prevent our becoming so easy and sudden a prey to evil and corrupt example, as otherwise might be.

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The spring of virtue, I confess, is deeper than education; yet a good education contributes much to virtue, and, I cannot but think, that a strict education in our way, must at least for a time, be a strong preservative from many dangerous allurements of the world; but our preciseness (if I may so call it) once laid aside, I have reason to think, that some of us know by *sad experience*, what captives we have been made to sinful sensual delights, in a variety of instances, I shall not mention, as your own reflections may abundantly supply the omission: Nevertheless, the long-suffering of God, which waited in the days of *Noah*, upon the old world, hath followed us from year to year; may it not be always in vain; but let us call his mercies to mind; we have the strongest obligations of interest and gratitude to do it; more especially *some of us*, who in time past forsook the living fountain of our mercies, days without number, and yet it continued to follow, and doth follow us still. And if men thus circumstanced will persist to rebel against such mercy, till they become obdurate and insensible, yet so sure as there's a God, a time of inquisition is at hand, and will surely come, when every false covering shall be taken away, and their insensibility of divine favour, their ridicule and mockery of sacred things, will aggravate their guilt. *All you* that shall be found in this state, will neither be able to repent, and be saved, nor (though it would then be very desirable) to flee from your existence; no rocks nor mountains shall cover you in that day, or be able to screen you from the fierce wrath of the Lamb: What a terrible time will this be? How do these words summons and rouse our apprehensions? How does the word LAMB, set forth the divine kindness and patience; and the other dart of the expression; the greatness of their sin, obduracy and impenitence, in provoking such mercy and patience, into unappeasable fury? And if there are any under our name, or who once bore it, into whose hands this may come, who in *time past* have had many precious and strong divine visitations, but have so long withstood them,

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that they are now become *daring* contemners of religion; and *warin* pleaders for infidelity; such I beseech, if providence should *once more* visit their souls with his love; humbly to cherish and embrace it; or their houses will be left desolate, and their misery be terrible. In the mean time, such pests of religion, (tho' we cannot in conscience or inclination do them the least harm) should be carefully avoided; for they are (some of them at least) men who have maintained a long and hot combat with conscience, by withstanding the strongest inward convictions; and having in *this manner*, forsaken their own tender mercies, are now become the insidious seducers of others; wherefore Oh my soul, come not thou into their secret, unto their assemblies be not thou united, *for the poison of asps is under their tongue, and their steps take hold upon hell.*

I was formerly acquainted with a person under our name, (now in his grave) who perhaps in his younger time, accounted religion the *primary* blessing of man, but became afterward a fierce denier and despiser of christianity; though on a certain occasion he confessed to me, 'twas the hardest task he ever had, to get rid of religion; or as he politely phrased it, *the prejudice of education*. So strong is divine love, extended for the salvation of mankind, as cannot be finally withstood, but by such ingratitude, stubbornness, and impenitence, as *fully merits* the fierce wrath to come: Others who have not gone this length, but *preserve appearances* of orthodoxy, and are pretty much so in their hearts, are it is to be feared, in a dying or decayed condition. Once they were deeply enamoured with religion, but have now too much forgot the day and love of their espousals, the time of the humiliation and gladness of their hearts; and though they enjoy the fatness of the earth, and have place and preheminance in the church, and like pictures and statues, look fair and specious to the eye, yet have little life and vital heat remaining, but are poor, and lean, and wretched within.

But above all, a *studied hypocrisy* in the highest acts of religion, is a monster indeed. The lukewarm, the apostate, and infidel, are saints compared to the man, who counterfeits a solemn embassy under the broad seal of heaven; who *pretends* to have an immediate commission from God to preach to the people, when he must be an impudent lying villain, because *he knows* that God never sent him.

We may be now fully convinced of our duty, and yet in process of time by disobedience, become so insensible, as to call it enthusiasm, blindness, and what not; but as we have closed our own eyes, and benumbed our spiritual senses by sin, a time will come when our eyes will be opened, and our senses be restored, and we shall be judged according to our deeds, and that inward sense we had received of our duty to God: And notwithstanding the seeming candour or integrity of some unbelievers, who may have had the *great blessing* of a religious education amongst us, I account them (though I desire to be candid) as innocent in their unbelief, as I would do a man so enured to swearing, as not to be sensible when he does swear, supposing him to have had a religious education, and to have first contracted that horrid habit under great reluctance and self-condemnation; for no good or sober man becomes wicked without remorse of mind. He that knows the benefit of sight, yet *wilfully* puts out his own eyes, is accountable for all the mischief that follows as a consequence in the dark, even though he should in time become stupid enough to forget that ever he could see, or insist upon it that he was born blind, or even that he still sees: Pretty much parallel to these suppositions, (without breach of charity) seems to be the case of some unbelievers, who deride and deny as superstitious chimera's, what they once *certainly saw and felt*, and rejoiced in as the greatest of all blessings; desired nothing so much as to be preserved in the sense of it, and feared nothing in this world so greatly as their present dark degenerate condition, wherein they
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say they see, and that they were blind before ; but had any one then told them of becoming what they now are, they might like *Hazael* to the Prophet, have said *what is thy servant (or am I) a dog, that I should do this great wickedness ?* These sort of stupifying wonders does sin long repeated work upon the minds of apostates ; we may have observed it in some sad instances, and it is also confirmed by scripture, when the apostle *Peter* tells us, ---- *But he that lacketh those things (faith, virtue, knowledge, &c.) is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.*

Such confirmed apostates would persuade you, that nothing ought to be suffered for religion, without demonstration, or absolute certainty ; but this (though supernatural impressions on the mind of man are often indisputably clear and self-evident) I call a *preposterous*, if not a prophane way of talking : Common life in matters of less moment shews it to be so ; where the wisest of men upon probabilities only put themselves to so much toil and expence : Indeed, where the benefit sought is small, the probability of obtaining it the same, and the pains, expence, and application, must be great, common prudence will teach us to desist, but when the benefit sought is great or considerable, and the probability of obtaining it not very great, even here, reason will sometimes warrant diligent application : The several fruitless attempts that have been made to discover a *North-west* passage, is one evidence in this way : But lastly, when the blessing we seek, will, if obtained, be eternal and inestimable ; where at least the probability is great, and the means used to obtain it, (should the thing sought be a fiction) carry with them more than a present reward of peace and consolation, we have strong reason to seek it earnestly, and suffer for it joyfully ; and this have many thousands experienced to be the case in religion : Wherefore, the argument may be strongly inverted upon unbelievers and mockers of religion, who can never be secure in their unbelief and rejection of christianity, with-

out clearly demonstrating the truths it teaches, the promises it makes, and the threatenings it exhibits, *are nothing better* than the superstitions of weak, or the inventions of political or ill designing men. This they are bound to make out, and unless they can do it, you may rationally and religiously *defy* their weak and wicked attempts to seduce you.

Christianity *does not only* consist in certain truths necessary to be believed, but is a principle of light, energy and comfort in the soul; though some would persuade you to treat it as a melancholy whimsey and chimera, that has no foundation in truth, or any thing in it joyous and delightful; but it is so far from being this empty and mortifying principle, that he who has truly tasted of the happiness it gives, and relished its supreme excellence and beauty; will (for some time at least) find it hard to rest contented in any other enjoyment; nay, were it possible to resolve, or consolidate all the pleasures of sense and speculation into one intire sensation, to be repeated and enjoyed at pleasure, the comforts of religion, or the love of GOD, shed abroad in our hearts, would *exceedingly* transcend it: *For eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for those that love him.*

And as to the many recreations and amusements, that take up so much of the precious time and affections of mankind; even these, suppose them (what I think they are not) ever so inoffensive, where religion takes right place *diminish* their charms and entertainment to the mind: Such is the dignity and happiness, with which it fills and satisfies the soul, that the fashionable amusement and diversions of the times, are as *freely* and naturally discarded, as a man despises the rattle which was the favourite entertainment of his childish years: Yea, as a toy to sober manhood, less, and much less, are the most alluring inticements of sense, to the truly redeemed religious mind; and the deaf and the blind shall

shall as soon persuade me to deny my bodily senses, as the most subtil enemies of religion, persuade me to forego my christian experience; for admit, that we cannot by argument make it plain that the comforts of religion are really a divine foretaste here of the fullness hereafter; yet of this *we are sure*, that what we do feel *is real*, yea transcendantly ravishing and excellent; of this we are certain, as of our existence, and the reality of our bodily sensations; and religion is therefore, as a matter of present experience, the most eligible for our choice and approbation, as the *highest* and supreamest happiness of which man in his present estate is capable.

It is not my present design to trace *infidelity* through all her arts of *deception*; yet shall make a few remarks on account of some of my *younger friends*, who may, (as I have formerly done) now and then make a trip to the *Theatre*, have sometimes heard and seen, and admired the most accomplished *GARRICK*; and at other times, in very different assemblies, under the influence of gospel ministry, *have tasted the good word of life, and felt the powers of the world to come.*

It hath, no doubt, been insinuated to you my friends, or the thought may have often passed your own minds with sufficient complacency, that all gospel ministry, as to any supernatural energy, is *nothing more* than working upon the passions, in the *manner* of tragedies well represented, &c. But I hope some of you upon a serious retrospection will allow, these two cases to differ widely; though I know by sad experience, how agreeable the entertainments of the stage are to the carnal mind; which *thus* debased contemns better things. I have also tasted the sweets of religion, felt the calm it brings over the mind, known how it solves our doubts, teaches to condemn nobly the pleasures of sense, and at certain seasons so greatly confirms our faith, and invigorates our best resolutions, that no spirit of infidelity remains, and we are ready to break forth in
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strains of higher admiration than the Queen of the South, (for indeed we have stronger inducements) *the one half has never been told me.*

Theatrical entertainments, when wrought to a high pitch, in representations of deep scenes of distress, or the contrary, make *present* considerable impressions on the mind, but as it is chiefly done through the channel of sense, when the external causes are removed, these impressions soon die away and perish. But when a mean performer appears, his manner and action excites scorn and contempt, and he is often dismissed with public marks of disapprobation. On the other hand, religious impressions made upon the mind by means of the christian ministry, are more permanent, not only through persons the most eminent in this way, but from such as are outwardly very mean and illiterate: Nay sometimes even in silence, when the mind is profoundly abstracted from the influence and importunity of external objects, and *strange* as it may seem to some, its own busy workings within, in a state rightly quiet and passive, the God of the spirits of all flesh is pleased to draw near, in the sweet influences and gentle distillations of divine love, touching the soul, not at the superficies, but in her very centre, if I may be allowed such an expression.

Plays and *preaching*, if I understand them rightly, are very different in their *nature* as well as in the *manner* of their influence; they differ in *nature*, because one is merely *human*, the other *divine*; and in their *manner*, because plays are only combinations of human wisdom, art, and action, addressing through the inlets of the eyes and ears, the understanding, and sometimes melting *transiently* the passions of the audience, and is at best, no more than *creature acting upon creature*. But a true gospel ministry, arises from the immediate agency of the second Adam, the LORD from heaven, the quickning Spirit upon the spirit of the preacher; no wonder therefore, its impressions upon the hearer, should

should be more valuable and lasting, than every influence of *inferior* nature and origin. If this ministry (as sometimes it does) comes in the way of judgment and condemnation to the soul of the hearer, it is able (to apply figuratively an expression of a late celebrated Poet) to make it *smart and agonize at every pore*. If it comes in the way of consolation, it is able to excite deep divine sensations of *unutterable* spiritual joy, thrilling as it were throughout the whole intellectual frame: It is sweet in remembrance, as well as in possession, yields solid peace upon after reflection, without those stings and pangs of remorse, which often follow such as mispend their precious time in sensual gratifications. The christian ministry is both divine and rational, makes its addressee to the understanding by sound speech which cannot be condemned: But the most edifying part consists in its supernatural influences or divine energy upon the mind of the hearer; I confess it is not easy to conceive how this can be conveyed by words from one person to another, or in what secret manner from one spirit to another: This point of ministerial energy is too nice and abstruse for me to decide positively, yet I take the liberty of offering a modest conjecture upon the subject. I do suspect then, it arises very much from an immediate instantaneous co-operative, supernatural influence upon the soul of the hearer, *at the instant*, and during the action of preaching, and the same spirit ruling in both, produces such an exquisite harmony as may easily persuade the hearer, that all the energy he feels, is conveyed *solely* through the preacher; but if we allow a divine co-operative influence upon the mind of the hearer, its effects must be both deep and permanent, not only from the nature of the present supernatural impression upon the mind; but because the immediate agency of the Holy Ghost in his office of Comforter, may (and I doubt not often does) continue upon the mind of the hearer, after the action of preaching ceases; which may account for its duration.

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I conceive, that in the *Apostles*, there might have been a strong analogy between their ministry and miracles, as to that divine power which affected the souls and bodies of the people. In vain had *Paul* preached to *Lydia*, if the LORD had not opened her heart to attend to the things which were spoken by *Paul*. But we have a remarkable instance from *Peter*, who in giving a relation to his brethren in *Jerusalem*, of his visit to the house of *Cornelius* the Centurion, saith, ---- *And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them as on us at the beginning*: If it did, as I suppose, fall as immediately upon *this company*, as upon the apostles at the day of Pentecost, yet its falling pursuant to the sending for *Peter*, and at the time of his speaking, was the same confirmation of his mission, as if the Holy Ghost had been really conveyed *mediately* from him to them; and if what I suppose, be admitted, it may avoid the difficulties of the contrary supposition. And as to their miracles, does any man suppose, their *words*, their *touch*, or their *garments*, were the efficient causes of the many miracles wrought upon sick, maimed, diseased, and even dead persons? What the apostles said and did in these cases, might indeed seem to be efficient causes of their miracles: But their *words*, their *touch*, or their *garments*, seem in themselves *utterly incapable* of producing such stupendous effects. I conceive therefore, that when they *spoke*, or *touched*, and a miracle immediately ensued, the divine power was instantaneously applied to work this miracle upon the object or patient. Our Saviour, *John* xiv. says, *that the Father which dwelt in him did the works*; it may then well be admitted, that the Holy Spirit which dwelt in the apostles, did the miracles ascribed to them: they *speaking*, or *touching* by his immediate command. It was the LORD (*Mark* xvi. 20.) who *confirmed the word by signs*. And I question if the apostles, in any of the miracles ascribed to them, were any more possessed of the power by which they were wrought, than the prophets had in themselves the powers sufficient to accomplish their prophecies: Though in both cases they went upon
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sure grounds, and could not be deceived. But as to the christian ministry, if I do not offer it as argument, I hope I may give it as my opinion, that there are *even now* in the church of CHRIST, some persons, who by long exercise of their spiritual senses, *Heb. v. 14.* are become such exquisite judges in spiritual matters, as to be able under the christian ministry, to feel or perceive a supernatural energy, under faulting accents in mean instruments; and also to discern the want of it: if without divine commission, the greatest truths of the gospel should be uttered with all the powers of a *Garrick* to command and melt the passions.

But should we admit, that at the time of preaching the gospel by inspiration, there is no co-operative influence upon the mind of the hearer, and that the preacher like the player through the senses reaches the understanding and the passions, will that set plays upon an equality with preaching? by no means; good and evil enter at the same door; the inlet to the soul may be the same, but the messengers that enter, very different, in nature, use, and dignity. The passions through the senses may be suitably excited; and religion having GOD and the blessings he hath provided, for its objects; the christian ministry, (which must have a divine energy in some way or other) pressing home these things with superior power, affects both the understanding and passions in a more suitable and edifying manner, than objects merely temporary, or means merely human and artificial (let them exhibit what they please) can be reasonably supposed to do.

Religion when stript of its life and energy, is not to be supported by external pomp and magnificence, (though there is much of this in the world,) yet am I a great lover of order, and think the christian ministry worthy of being freed from every indecorum in pronunciation, gesture, or the like; and ornamented with whatever is decent and becoming. Nor can I deny, but that sometimes in our worship, mechanical
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influence through the senses upon the passions, may have too much place with some weak minds, to the annoyance and disturbance of others, more weighty and wise: I am *very jealous* of that devotion, where the senses and passions connected have the principal concern. In treating this subject, without great care, we may easily confound the passions and senses, though they are as different as a city, and the roads that lead to it. Through my eyes and my ears I may be displeased; but surely no man will say, his eyes and his ears are made angry: It may be far more difficult to distinguish the mind from her passions, I wave this attempt as foreign to my purpose; but we cannot too carefully distinguish between the soul misled by her passions, when either by their habitual prevalence over the soul, they *excite* those evil thoughts in her, which she too freely indulging, sets her passions in a perturbation or flame, or when they are unduly agitated by the agency of external objects and sounds, operating by the *medium* or *channel* of sense; I say, we should distinguish between the soul thus circumstanced, and when exerting her intellectual powers, under the assistance of GOD's grace, instead of being a slave to, she maintains her sovereignty over her passions, ruling and directing them to their proper objects, ends and uses. Here they are noble, and a soul without passions, and a body without senses, might be equally strange. And as to the matter of devotion; I desire we may most accurately distinguish between those external sounds and habits, which may be the *means* of false enthusiastic devotion, from what may be the *effect* of true devotion first genuinely kindled within: Nor dare I condemn every external appearance of the latter kind; for as the heart most inwardly and divinely touched by divine love, sometimes overflows in streams from the eyes, it may break forth in sighs and groans, *Rom. viii. 26.* and *inarticulate melody*, not to be uttered in words at others. But as outward appearances of this nature, are sometimes the *trick* of the impostor, the *habit* or mistake of the weak, and that many wise and good

good christians seldom, if ever appear in their public devotion after this manner; it may be very prudent to keep a strong guard in this place. Give me (for the most part) a ministry that is sound, decent, and lively; a devotion that is still deep and awful, that needs not the vibration of the head, or the mechanism of inarticulate sounds to assist and enliven it. If this paragraph should be obscure to many, I hope it will be well understood by those readers for whom it is intended.

I had once inclination to have been in this piece more particular, in defence of several peculiarities, which have distinguished us as a people from the world; but shall only now give a few general hints. Words are originally, or in their nature merely arbitrary; without any natural relation to our ideas; yet by time, consent, and custom, our words and our ideas are so united, and intelligible, as if their relation was perfectly natural. Wherefore, as such certain relations do exist between and among mankind, which render some modes of speech proper, others improper; 'tis surprising to think how several forms of speech *utterly unbecom- ing* those to whom they are addressed, have stole into such current use, that the man who abides by truth and simplicity in his words and manners, is made too much the jest of men of sense as well as of fools; so that custom in several instances hath turned common sense as well as religion out of doors. The nature of things is indeed ever the same, but pride and perverse customs, mislead our apprehensions, and corrupt our practice concerning them: On which account the many unworldly testimonies our forefathers had to bear in the world, (though in themselves rational and defensible) met with grievous resistance. And indeed, merely bearing our several christian testimonies is not sufficient; we must bear them in a suitable manner; neither in a mean slavish dread of man, nor in an *insipid* or *insolent formality*, which wealth and years too often inspire; but in christian meekness and fortitude;

not because we *contemn* any man who is beneath us, or from a *disregard* of our equals, or an unmannerly presumption of *equality* with our superiors or betters; but for the sake of a tender conscience, and because with *Elibu*, we fear in the use of flattering titles and speeches, to offend our maker; and this, either known, or believed to be our motive, what name deserve those, be they of what rank they will, who take offence at us? Pride being so much disgusted with our plain behaviour, is one good reason for it. It may be just in God, through his servants, to deny that homage to the world, which it so proudly expects from them; while it denies or foregoes its own homage due to him.

In appearing after our manner, (according to the best examples in scripture, the concern and practice of our fore fathers) before the great, the affluent and the proud; there are none so much to be pitied as the poor, the bashful and the young, to whom this cross has been hard as death itself. May we all, but all such especially, live under the daily sense of that holy principle, which is wisdom in our foolishness, strength in our weakness, and we shall nobly bear the contumelies of a vain world, and look down with christian pity upon a race of poor degenerated mortals.

This divine principle, though by taking away the superfluities and exuberances of *form*, it may reduce our manners to the better standard of truth, is so far from changing men into clowns and boors, that it humbles the greatest, and exalts the meanest; inspires sometimes a delightful mein in the most illiterate, and by mending the temper and sweetening the natural affections, is able to improve the politest education, *and make men civil beyond all forms of breeding.** And others

* See *William Penn's* character of *George Fox*. Preface to his Journal,

cannot only see and acknowledge this, but in their best intervals ardently wish themselves as wise and as happy: *How beautiful are thy tents O Jacob, and thy dwelling places O Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!*

If I have suppressed some things more warm and emphatic, lest I should seem to appear in a character, not suiting my present circumstance and attainments, I hope none will blame me for that.

As to the doctrine, on account of which, this treatise was penned, and other tenets we hold; if their evidences were more numerous and strong, even then I think, nothing short of divine illumination and strength, would enable us rightly to discern, profess, and put them in practice: On the other hand, were our reasons in the case of war, fewer and weaker than they are; yet the clearness of the convictions of a divine principle; the power it gives, and the strong consolation it brings, would abundantly warrant our obedience to it. And this observation, deserves in my judgment, the most solid attention.

I was so far from delighting in this work, that perhaps nothing but a belief that it was my duty could have engaged me in it; and having thus far discharged it, I humbly hope, the same satisfaction which I had in the two former steps will attend me in this, and then, I shall esteem all well, as to my self, and think my pains abundantly recompensed, which I desire, may be favourably received, and and not be altogether in vain to others.

And though some may apprehend me to be a deep dissembler, under the curse of a seared conscience, speaking lies in hypocrisy, yet I know what I have said to be the words of sincerity, truth, and soberness, and in a good degree of blessed experience; not without an humble hope, that the fears of my friends, or suggestions of my enemies to the contrary, shall in
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God's time be *fully removed*, and my soul be made more public monument of his mercy, and a true and living witness, that he is long suffering and slow to anger indeed. And as we read, that the acclamations of joy, both in heaven and earth, are so great for the return of one sinner; how great must the joy of such a sinner be? This great mercy extended to turning sinners, is to them an exhaustless theme of divine praise and gratitude.

I need not be ashamed to confess, how strong my desires have sometimes been, that it might please the fountain of this mercy to revive often his matchless goodness in my remembrance; and enable me to love him exceedingly, with all my heart, and soul, and strength: Nor have I prayed in vain; and when I have been enabled to commemorate this mercy, and reflect upon the extream danger of my former condition, it hath filled me with deep admiration of God's goodness; in the enjoyment of which I have abhorred myself as in dust and ashes, and have been ready to say with much gratitude and fervency of spirit, what manner of love is this? or who shall separate us from it? A love beyond all merit, understanding, or utterance of the best or brightest of mortals.

If in endeavouring to plead the cause of peace, religion, and virtue; I have reasoned weakly and inconclusively; all the blame will be mine: But if on the contrary, there is any thing said here, which may help to settle the minds of some persons amongst us, which were hurt or unsettled by my former book, or by any other means; or any thing which may open the eyes of sober enquirers after truth, I give infinite wisdom and goodness the praise, whose help I have reverently implored in this great and public undertaking.

RICHARD FINCH